

HOW WE CREATE AND PRESERVE VALUE

Each decision today protects every person's future

Our approach to delivering value focuses on creating a water-safe nation, being a responsible steward of the environment, ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees and volunteers, and maintaining the trust of our donors and sponsors. We are guided by our strategy, which prioritises long-term impact to effect tangible change in society.

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Message from our Chief Executive Officer

“Effective and transparent stakeholder engagement is essential to our mission of saving lives and building safer communities. By incorporating stakeholder engagement into every stage of our value creation process, we ensure that our operations, rescue services and educational initiatives remain relevant, impactful and sustainable.”

– Michael Vonk



The sophistication of the NSRI's business model is a testament to its resilience: balancing the responsibilities of a national maritime emergency service and a large-scale community drowning prevention programme, all enabled by volunteers and donor funding. The NSRI has established itself as a recognised leadership organisation in South Africa.

Challenges and opportunities

The pace and complexity of change in 2025 against a challenging economic environment were greater than anticipated. The year began with plans for consolidation and became one of renewal, which tested the resilience and adaptability of our people.

I am proud of the actions taken by both our volunteers and employees to achieve positive outcomes. We strengthened our future volunteer leadership by appointing new station commanders, while an organisational development process restructured our operations environment into a single, cohesive unit under the leadership of Brett Ayres as Chief Operating Officer. The result is clearer lines of responsibility, faster decision-making and a more integrated approach to delivering on our mission.

What never changes is the human impact of every community programme and rescue operation. Behind every number in this report is a life saved, a family kept whole and a community made safer.

Advocacy and prevention

Our community programmes division, which drives our prevention and advocacy efforts, ended 2025 materially stronger than it began with confirmed leadership, formalised volunteer governance, a growing network of institutional partnerships and a clear strategic direction towards scalable, partnership-driven delivery.

Our education programmes exceeded targets, reaching 899 756 people through water safety education across all nine provinces and delivering 25 043 survival swimming lessons.

The PRB network continued to expand nationally, saving 33 lives during the year and bringing the cumulative total to 239 since inception. We also expanded our beach safety camera network, with dedicated monitoring and analysis by specialists.

We hosted a stakeholder workshop with Stellenbosch University's Department of Emergency Medicine, focused on improving South Africa's drowning data systems. The workshop reinforced our shift from funding academic studies to enabling data collection and analysis through partnerships, which will guide our prevention strategies.



Message from our Chief Executive Officer continued

Lifeguarding and quality rescue services

Our lifeguarding programme responded to high seasonal demand across 50 sites with determination and operational maturity, ensuring effective service delivery despite short-notice contracts. Growing recognition of our training and delivery capability is evident in the Club Med Tinley Manor lifeguarding contract awarded to the NSRI in 2025.

Our rescue crews conducted 1 069 rescue operations during the year, supported by the upgraded EOC, which contributed to increased operational capability and improved coordination. Every operation is backed by countless hours of training.

The training team was expanded to increase capacity and deliver more courses nationwide. This included a first-of-its-kind accelerated surf training course launched to fast-track coxswain development in remote and under-resourced areas.

The new Station 49 Mdumbi on the Wild Coast, established after years of groundwork and formalised through a memorandum of understanding with the local municipality, demonstrates the community partnerships needed to expand our rescue services sustainably.

We invested R83.3 million in capital expenditure during the year, the largest annual capital investment in the NSRI's history, driven primarily by our decision to accelerate the build of our ORCs and conclude our Class 1 fleet replacement. The final two ORCs and their rescue bases at Station 4 Mykonos and Station 8 Hout Bay are due for completion in 2026.

Marketing, communication and fundraising

We improved our brand visibility to unprecedented levels with sustained investment in human-centred storytelling and engagements designed to grow trust among stakeholders. Our marketing and communication team supported public safety messaging by focusing on community-based prevention programmes, lifeguarding and high-impact rescues.

Through integrated campaigns and media partnerships, we continued to strengthen our position as a national voice for water safety and rescue readiness. Our Change the Score on Drowning campaign, featuring pitch-side advertising at international sporting events, was seen by millions worldwide.

A marketing campaign automation project was initiated to deliver more personalised, timely communications to donors and supporters, deepening engagement and improving the donor experience.

Digital and performance marketing contributed to an increase in revenue through lead generation as well as online donations and retail sales. As a growth engine, performance marketing supports the fundraising centre, which has evolved from a traditional call centre to a data-driven, multi-channel operation generating income from increasingly diversified streams.

Robust governance

Cost discipline was maintained throughout the year, with operating expenditure closely aligned to budget. We invested in multiple new information technology (IT) solutions to enable data-driven decision-making and reinforce operational discipline, while significantly strengthening our cybersecurity controls to address growing digital risks.

Looking ahead

Our priorities for 2026 are organised into four interconnected areas:

- Strengthening people and culture by sustaining the volunteer model.
- Modernising systems, technology and capability by investing in digital transformation and prioritising areas that remain reliant on manual processes.
- Engaging with stakeholders and strengthening brand leadership by scaling performance marketing, deepening donor insights, implementing marketing automation and expanding corporate and institutional partnerships.
- Advancing knowledge and sustainability by deepening our understanding of drowning epidemiology and embedding environmental sustainability across our operations.

With gratitude

It is a privilege to serve the NSRI alongside the people who make our work possible: our volunteers, employees, Board, donors, corporate and government partners, emergency services and the communities we protect.

Michael Vonk
Chief Executive Officer



Our business model

Our business model is the system we use to coordinate our resources, capabilities and partnerships to deliver lifesaving services, advance water safety and sustain a lasting impact for the communities we serve.



Vision: A water-safe nation

Six strategic focus areas aligned to our capitals (our inputs)

The resources and relationships that enable us to achieve our mission across all strategic pillars



Developing sustainable funding solutions



Developing and sustaining our people for the future



Investing in best-in-class rescue assets and infrastructure



Building trust, collaboration and community resilience



Innovating towards safety



Championing environmental stewardship



Our ability to create and preserve value is impacted by our external operating environment, our risks and opportunities and material matters (refer to **our external context** chapter).



These impacts are managed through strong governance and leadership oversight (refer to **our leadership and governance** chapter).

Mission: Preserving life and livelihoods

Purpose: Saving lives, changing lives, creating futures

Our five strategic pillars and supporting business activities

How we will deliver on our strategy with a long-term focus



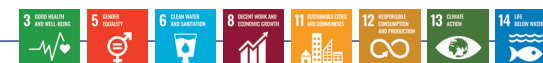
Key:  Strategic pillar  Business activity  Service pillar  Division

Our impact (outcomes)

P36 Read the [performance section](#) for details.



P110 In delivering our services, we also **contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:**



Our business model continued

Strategic trade-offs and resource allocation

To save lives today while building a resilient NSRI for tomorrow, we must make thoughtful choices about how we use resources. Financial capital sits at the centre of these decisions, but the interdependencies between all six capitals make our service delivery model possible: investment in manufactured capital (vessels and stations) depends on and enables human capital development, while intellectual capital (technology, training systems and research) amplifies the reach of social and relationship capital in communities. Natural capital stewardship shapes both operational demand and response.



The key trade-offs that shape our strategic decisions

Enabling capitals	Enabling capitals
	
Trade-offs	Trade-offs
Balancing investment in new technology and equipment versus maintaining and upgrading existing assets	Prioritising training for high-risk rescue operations versus ensuring widespread reach
Considerations	Considerations
By maintaining and diversifying income streams, we can invest in new technologies and approaches that improve outcomes. While enabling best-in-class capital investments supports operational excellence and future growth, these financial resources are also needed to maintain and upgrade established infrastructure. The SafeTRX cost increase illustrates how external commercial dynamics can pressure internally valued tools. The ORC programme shows how long-term capital planning creates multi-decade operational capability.	Human capital is simultaneously our greatest asset and vulnerability. Our financial sustainability depends on volunteerism, our fleet requires trained crews and our social and relationship capital (community programmes) are delivered by people who must be supported and sustained. Manufactured capital is inseparable from human capital: the ORC programme requires months of crew preparation, and station expansion depends on recruiting and training new volunteers while building community trust. Investing in the motivation, competence and well-being of employees and volunteers through support structures, recognition and skills development improves our efficiency and effectiveness. However, focusing on high-risk areas limits expansion to underserved regions.

Enabling capitals



Trade-offs

Allocating resources to advanced volunteer training versus recruiting and training new volunteers

Considerations

Research (intellectual capital) informs programme design (social and relationship capital), training systems (intellectual capital) builds crew capability (human capital) and technology platforms like SafeTRX bridge manufactured capital (vessels) with the speed of response that saves lives.

Advanced volunteer training, applying innovative technology and approaches to improve outcomes, enables achievement of our goals. However, investment in this training limits our capacity to onboard additional volunteers.

Enabling capitals



Trade-offs

Investing in public education and awareness programmes versus direct rescue operations

Considerations

Strengthening relationships with volunteers, donors, sponsors and communities fosters trust, expands safety programmes and sustains operations. Community-based programmes reduce the need for rescues over the long term but divert resources from immediate operational needs.

Community trust enables fundraising and volunteer recruitment, while education programmes create a more water-safe population, reducing future demand on rescue operations. This is a virtuous cycle, with prevention reducing the burden on reactive capability.

Enabling capitals



Trade-offs

Implementing environmentally sustainable practices versus the potential increase in operational costs

Considerations

Environmental stewardship is an emerging strategic consideration for the organisation. Sustainable practices enhance our reputation and long-term viability by minimising the environmental impact of operations and integrating sustainability into organisational planning and decision-making. However, this requires financial investment that must be weighed against other operational priorities.

Our approach to environmental advocacy is measured, recognising that our diverse stakeholder base, including donors, corporate partners and local government, holds a range of perspectives. We pursue environmental responsibility through our operations and partnerships rather than public advocacy that may not reflect the breadth of views within our community. As our environmental strategy matures, this trade-off will become increasingly material.

Enabling capitals



Trade-offs

Investing in operational capability versus intellectual capital development

Considerations

Operational demands require continuous investment in volunteer training, rescue assets and frontline capacity. However, intellectual capital, including research, data collection and epidemiological analysis, is essential to understanding drowning patterns and shaping effective prevention strategies.

In 2025, we shifted from funding academic studies to enabling data collection and analysis through partnerships, redirecting intellectual capital investment towards outcomes that will guide long-term prevention. This trade-off reflects the tension between resourcing immediate operational needs and building the evidence base that reduces future demand.

Our strategy and performance

Our strategy aims to bring our vision, purpose, mission and values to life for meaningful and sustainable stakeholder impact.



Our five-year strategy (2023 to 2028)

Our forward-looking strategy, reviewed annually, outlines what we aim to achieve through deliberate, progressive phases. It considers the time, focus and continual improvement needed to build a sustainable organisation. Each phase has been planned to ensure we deliver the people, processes and technology, at the highest standards, required for success.

Together, our strategic pillars and focus areas form the foundation of the NSRI's integrated strategy, connecting purpose, performance and sustainability across all aspects of the organisation. Achieving our short-term strategic priorities enables us to successfully execute our strategy in the long term.



Five strategic pillars

Five strategic pillars translate our vision into operational priorities and outcomes to support the NSRI's efforts to build capacity, resources and the relationships needed to sustain our performance and long-term impact:

How we achieve this



Six strategic focus areas

Our six strategic focus areas represent the resources and relationships that sustain our performance and impact, guiding how we deliver on our mission across all strategic pillars.

The sections that follow explain how we have performed against our strategy this year through the lens of our strategic focus areas.

Our strategy and performance continued

Performance



In 2025, the
NSRI teams
responded to
1 069
rescue operations,
assisted
1 548
people,
and reached
924 799
children with water
safety education
and survival
swimming lessons
across the country



Each success story contributes to safer communities, far beyond the moment itself.

The year marked a period of consolidation as we stabilised after a major restructure, neared completion of a once in a generation fleet renewal programme and expanded our community reach.





Strategic reflection at the station commander conference in August reinforced the importance of calm, disciplined decision-making alongside the NSRI's deeply ingrained culture of action.

As we mature, we continue to balance speed with safety, recognising that long-term impact depends not only on courage and commitment, but on thoughtful leadership and deliberate choices that protect both rescuers and those they serve, while always balancing risk and reward.



Our strategy and performance continued

Developing sustainable funding solutions

Every donation we receive enables us to save more lives. The ripple effect of each contribution is massive: just one donor’s contribution can help to fund a rescue that keeps an entire family whole and a community safe. It is our commitment to honour every bit of support we get through careful and disciplined financial management, accurate and timely reporting, and good controls.



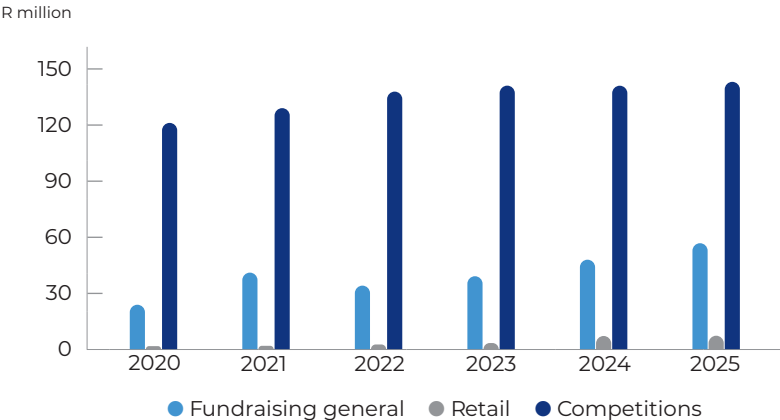
How we create and preserve value

We receive funds from donors, partners and businesses, enabling us to deliver our lifesaving services and ensure future economic value for South Africa.

Our funds are generated from donations and sponsorships from individuals, institutions, corporations and government. Over the past two decades, we have built a resilient, steady approach to fundraising that has enabled us to sustain and expand our operations and impact. Our approach is underpinned by a diverse and scalable fundraising model that ensures we are never reliant on any single source of income and that we can generate stable, predictable income flows for effective planning. Protecting and evolving this model is a strategic priority.

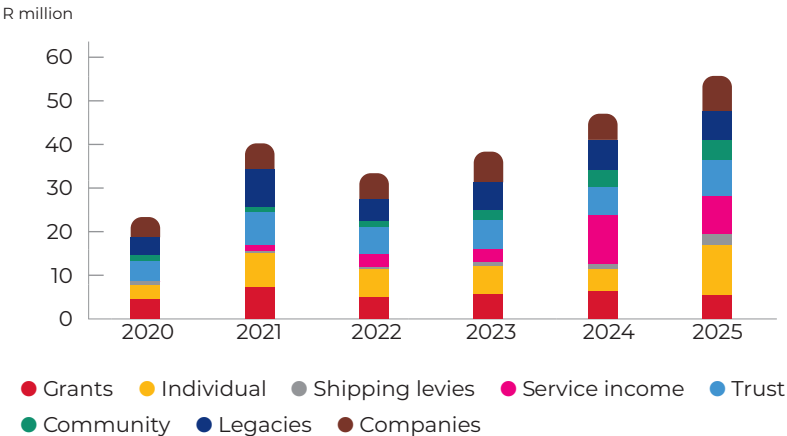
The graph below shows the various sources of our fundraising. This highlights the key role of our fundraising competitions and the growing contribution from retail sales.

Fundraising by source



The graph below provides a breakdown of fundraising general (non-competition and non-retail fundraising sources). This demonstrates the importance of each diverse income stream as a contributor to steady growth over time.

Fundraising general breakdown



Value created and preserved over time

Key organisational metrics to track our performance

Revenue contributions from different funding sources

Number of donors and supporters

2025

R221 million

101 853

2024

R200 million

100 021*

2023

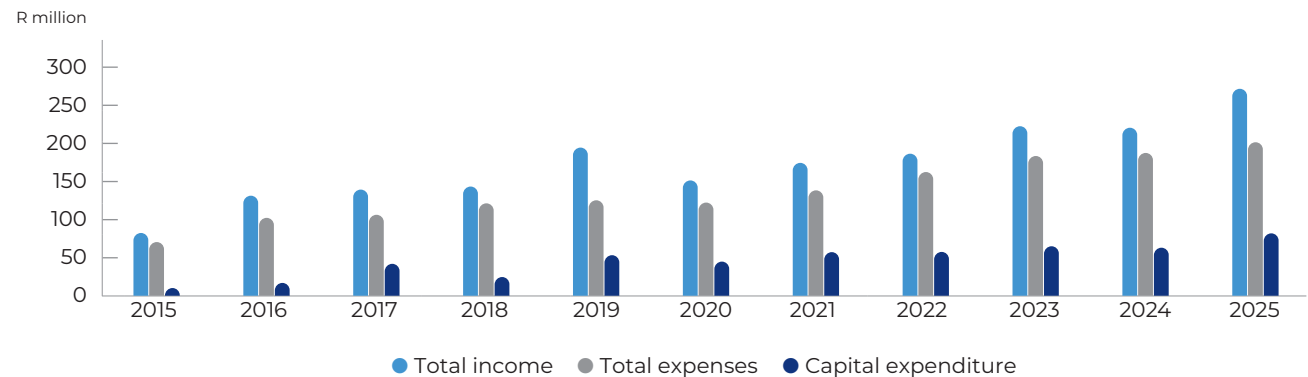
R187 million

101 777

* Restated due to redefining the classification of donors.

10-year income, expenses and capital trendline

Over the past 10 years, the NSRI has shown steady growth in income, matched by appropriate operating cost increases while supporting our intensive capital investment programme, which began in 2017, with the new deep-sea fleet regeneration programme.



Performance highlights

Income*
R221.3 million
(2024: R200.0 million)

Operating surplus
R19.2 million
(2024: R13.4 million)

Retail sales
R7.2 million
(2024: R6.9 million)

General fundraising
R56.6 million
(2024: R47.8 million)

Fundraising centre competitions
R142.8 million
(2024: R140.3 million)

Challenges impacting our performance

- Maintenance and operational costs are increasing due to inflation and ageing infrastructure.
- Market volatility creates uncertainty in long-term financial planning.
- Economic pressure constrains donations from individuals and organisations.
- Donor fatigue creates pressure from competing non-profit entities.

Focus areas in 2026

- Consolidate automation gains in fundraising and financial management to ensure full adoption of digital workflows.
- Complete Microsoft Business Central, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), point-of-sale and banking system integrations to strengthen real-time control and reporting.
- Enhance analytical and reporting capability to support insights-driven decision-making.
- Implement structured staff development and training programmes aligned with digital transformation goals.
- Maintain zero repeat audit findings through disciplined control processes and continuous monitoring.
- Increase our reach into corporates, government and state-owned enterprises, individuals and international funding segments.
- Strengthen donor experiences through improved engagement platforms.

* Excludes distribution from Endowment Trust.

Our strategy and performance continued



CASE STUDY



Changing the Score on Drowning: Turning sport into sustainable fundraising

In the noise of global sport, millions of people watch, celebrate and connect. This gave us an opportunity to grab attention for something that goes largely unheard and unnoticed: the moments around drowning.

Drowning is silent. It mostly happens without a shout, without a splash and without warning. It remains one of the leading causes of accidental death globally, with a disproportionate impact in Africa. Our continent carries an estimated 22% of the global burden of drowning and records the highest regional drowning death rate, at 5.6 per 100 000 population. Against this backdrop, we developed a simple idea: use the loudest moments in sport to highlight one of the quietest crises.

The Change the Score on Drowning campaign placed a lifesaving message directly into several high-attention sporting environments. During the FA Community Shield at Wembley Stadium, and later during a Springboks versus All Blacks rugby test match in New Zealand, pitch-side virtual LED boards carried our message and positioned a stark contrast: "The game is loud. Drowning is silent. Let's change that score."

These virtual LED placements extended beyond the stadium on the day; they were visible to targeted broadcast audiences across Africa. This ensured that the message reached regions most affected by drowning, connecting global sporting moments with a distinctly local and urgent public health challenge.

The campaign's impact worked on two levels. Firstly, it raised awareness. The message on the field and international broadcast feeds brought drowning into the mainstream conversation across multiple countries, including in Africa. The campaign used the energy of sport to highlight a silent tragedy that often goes unnoticed.

Secondly, it strengthened our fundraising efforts. The campaign was designed to convert attention into action. Viewers were invited to respond to the NSRI by sending an SMS after spotting the message. In this way, we turned passive viewers into active supporters. The campaign generated more than 19 000 leads and contributed approximately R330 000 in revenue from the two events. Conversion rates reached up to 16%, outperforming broader campaign averages and bringing in new monthly donors. This supports a key strategic priority for the NSRI: building sustainable, owned fundraising channels that ensure consistent support for our prevention and rescue services.

Importantly, the campaign remained grounded in real impact. Behind every statistic is a life, a family and a community. Our work, from survival swimming and water safety education to lifeguarding and rescue, focuses on preventing these tragedies before they happen.

Our ability to respond quickly was also evident. When the opportunity to partner with the FA Community Shield arose at short notice, the team mobilised within days. This agility reflects the same operational readiness that defines our rescue work.

This case study demonstrates a scalable model, and that is, by aligning public health messaging with high-visibility platforms and pairing it with clear calls to action, we have shown how awareness can be converted into sustained impact.

In a world full of noise, the campaign achieved something simple and important: it made people notice and act and, in doing so, it helped change the score on drowning.



Learn more about [this campaign](#).



Read more about [how the impact of sport changes the score on drowning](#) on our website.

Our strategy and performance continued

Developing sustainable funding solutions continued

Sustainable funding results

The NSRI delivered a strong operating surplus of R19.2 million for the year ended 31 December 2025, R1.6 million ahead of budget, demonstrating financial resilience in a demanding operating environment. This surplus excludes the R47 million NSRI Endowment Trust distribution and provides the funds for our intensive capital expenditure programme.

Total revenue reached R221.3 million, R1.6 million above the budget of R219.7 million and R21.4 million (11%) higher than in 2024. This year-on-year growth includes a once-off surplus on the sale of the Glengariff property (R10.1 million). Excluding this, underlying revenue grew by R11.3 million (6%) compared to the prior year.

Revenue from fundraising activities of R206.5 million increased by R11.2 million (6%) compared to 2024 (R195.4 million), reflecting sustained growth across core fundraising streams. This is a remarkable achievement in a year when many NPOs and NPCs contracted, particularly following cuts in international aid to South Africa.

Our general fundraising portfolio raised R56.6 million in 2025 (2024: R47.8 million), reflecting strong year-on-year growth of 18.4%. This is also 12% ahead of the R50.6 million budget, demonstrating broad-based strength across multiple income categories.

In 2025, our fundraising centre competitions delivered R142.8 million, confirming this source as a primary revenue engine contributing approximately 69% of total operating income. This result was 1.1% above budget and 1.8% higher than 2024.



Read our **financial results** for detailed information.

Funding streams

We raise funds from a variety of sources and through multiple channels.

Competition and individual fundraising	We have two flagship fundraising competitions (the monthly giving cash prize and the car competition), which are driven by our outbound call centre. They are part of our powerful performance marketing model, which also drives direct individual donor appeals and retail online sales through multiple channels. We also engage with donors through events and activations at our stations and in local communities.
Business fundraising	We focus on engagements and partnerships with corporates, institutions, trusts, foundations and government departments. Relationship management and personal interactions are key in this approach. We target industry sectors and partners best aligned to our common cause, including the shipping, tourism and fishing industries.
Service income	Service income comes from a variety of organisations and institutions, including government and corporates. We provide services including lifeguarding, water safety training and medevacs.
Retail sales	Our clothing and merchandise offering provides a growing revenue stream from our stores and, increasingly, from direct online sales.

Fundraising highlights

Monthly giving competition

R5.3 million above budget (+5%).

Join the Crew that Saves Lives campaign, launched in the first quarter of 2025, was the primary monthly giving online acquisition platform.

Positive performance peaks were created around three grand prize draws during the year.

Cars4Good competition

At **R26.0 million**, the competition grew by R700 000 (2.8%) year on year and achieved a record single-day sale of **976** tickets (R678 320).

The NSRI also secured a landmark new Suzuki Auto partnership for 2026.

New donors

In 2025, our direct and social media campaigns added impetus to new donor volumes through improved lead generation and conversion rates. The combination of face-to-face and monthly giving's new acquisition approaches created a resilient and cost-effective donor pipeline.

Overall, the number of unique donors grew by 1.8% in 2025 compared to 2024, demonstrating our commitment to continuously strengthen donor retention and loyalty.

Retail sales

To subsidise crew clothing and PPE, the NSRI offers a range of branded clothing at its V&A Waterfront store in Cape Town and online. A professionalised approach was initiated in 2024 and embedded in 2025, delivering a turnover of R7.2 million last year (R7 million in 2024, R3.2 million in 2023), with online sales recording the strongest growth to reach R2.3 million for the year (R1.4 million in 2024, R0.3 million in 2023).

Our strategy and performance continued

Developing and sustaining our people for the future

By nurturing a future-fit organisation, we build an institution that is stronger, more resilient and more capable over time.



How we create and preserve value

Our employees and volunteers are the NSRI's most valuable assets. Their skills, experience, motivation and well-being enable us to deliver far-reaching services, including rescues, prevention and education initiatives.

As a strategic priority, we strengthen people and culture by:



Value created and preserved over time

Key metrics to track our performance	2025	2024	2023
Employee costs	R105 505 838	R101 711 484	R89 913 598
Employee-to-volunteer ratio	1:8	1:8	1:7
Training sessions	2 619	2 392	2 687
Volunteers trained	746	948	1 016
Employees trained	181	151	103

Employees 2025

189

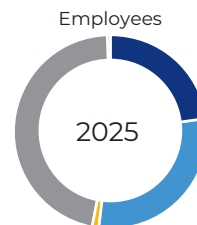
From 193 in 2024

Black* employees

53%

Up from 51% in 2024

Race breakdown



- African – 23%
- Coloured – 29%
- Indian – 1%
- White – 46%
- Foreign nationals – 1%

Transformation progress for 2025

Employees

Women

60%

compared to

65% in 2021

Black

53%

compared to

45% in 2021

Volunteers 2025

1 566

From 1 509 in 2024

Black volunteers

18%

Up from 17% in 2024

Race breakdown



- African – 9%
- Coloured – 8%
- Indian – 1%
- White – 81%
- Foreign nationals – 1%

Transformation progress for 2025

Volunteers

Women

30%

compared to

27% in 2021

Black

18%

compared to

16% in 2021

* Black refers to African, Coloured and Indian population groups as defined in the Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998.

Our strategy and performance continued

Developing and sustaining our people for the future continued

Performance highlights			
Investment in training	Volunteer breakdown*		Leadership development
We invested 1.05% (R1 079 440) of our salary bill in external training and development of employees and volunteers in 2025 (2024: 1.08% or R988 757).	360 coxswains (2024: 351)	458 roles served as prevention and support volunteers (survival swimming, PRB, beach safety camera operators, coast watchers, governance) (2024: 337)	- Volunteer leadership structures formalised for community programmes in the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape. - Renewed role structure with risk management aligned to Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993.
	698 sea crew (2024: 677)	575 trainees (2024: 402)	
	140 shore controllers (2024: 127)		- Implementing harassment and whistleblowing policies with anonymous digital reporting to the CEO and Chairperson via the volunteer portal and intranet. - Introducing a formal new staff induction programme including a full-day onboarding session, interactive organisational challenge and updated NSRI e-learning modules.

* These are roles served and not directly reconcilable to the number of volunteers due to multiple roles served.

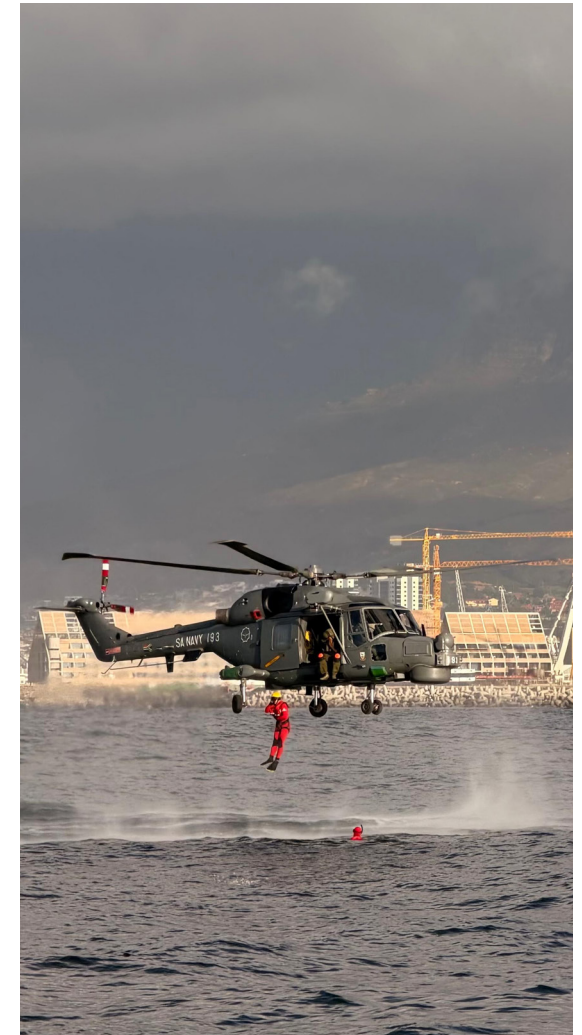


Challenges impacting our performance

- Volunteer recruitment and retention was flagged as a top risk (especially in rural areas).
- High-stress incidents and exposure to trauma are placing mental health strain on crews.

Focus areas in 2026

- Continue reviewing employment policies, onboarding and internal communication to ensure alignment with best practice, legislation and the NSRI's values and strategic objectives.
- Integrate payroll data into human resources and finance systems to enhance efficiency, accuracy, compliance and insight for evidence-based recruitment, remuneration and workforce planning.
- Develop and implement a new training and development strategy, including internships, aligned with performance management, inclusivity and holistic wellness, to strengthen technical capability, leadership skills and succession planning.
- Advance measurable employment equity and B-BBEE outcomes through targeted diversity, skills development, supplier engagement and management control initiatives.



Our strategy and performance continued



CASE STUDY



A coast-to-coast classroom: Building the next generation of coxswains

At NSRI, our work is built on three interconnected service pillars: community programmes, lifeguarding and rescue. Together, they provide a comprehensive approach to water safety, from prevention through to emergency response, saving lives while improving safety for future generations.

In September 2025, 10 aspiring coxswains set off on a two-week journey along South Africa's coastline. Drawn from our community programmes team and stations across the country, they came together to build their skills under real-world conditions as one team.

This was not a classroom course. It was an innovative, hard-working, coast-to-coast training model designed to prepare coxswains for the realities of rescue, while strengthening the link between prevention, preparedness and response. The aim was to build confident, capable coxswains who can operate safely and independently in varied and challenging environments, and who understand their role in the full water safety system.

Led by our training and operations team, the programme moved from Station 18 Melkbosstrand in the Western Cape to Station 49 Mdumbi in the Eastern Cape. Along the way, candidates trained at multiple stations, including Station 42 Kleinmond, Station 36 Oyster Bay, Station 46 Storms River, Station 7 East London, Station 33 Witsand and Station 23 Wilderness. Each location brought different conditions, from surf launches to river mouths and slipways.

At Station 23 Wilderness, known for its demanding surf, the group faced some of their toughest conditions. The experience was about more than technical skill; it was about learning from the culture and experience built over decades and understanding how rescue operations connect with lifeguarding services and community-based prevention efforts.

Candidates were trained under close supervision, with a strong focus on decision-making, crew coordination and readiness for real incidents. This connection between training and operations became clear when a real call-out took place right at the end of the course in the remote Mdumbi surf. The team responded immediately, shifting from training into rescue. It was a strong reminder that readiness is not theoretical.

For participants, the long and intense experience was both demanding and rewarding. Moving between such varied locations exposed the candidates to changing conditions and new challenges. It reinforced a simple truth: the sea is always different, and learning never stops.

The programme also built something less visible but just as important: trust. Candidates arrived from diverse stations, backgrounds and roles. Over the course of two weeks, they became a cohesive group. They learned to communicate, understand each other's strengths and weaknesses, and work as a team under intense pressure. These are the foundations of effective rescue. Importantly, the impact of this course extends beyond the individuals trained. Each trainee coxswain returned to their station with new skills and experience, strengthening their local crew, supporting lifeguarding operations and improving readiness in their community.

This travelling training model shows how we can accelerate learning while maintaining high standards. It strengthens peer learning across stations and disciplines, and builds a shared approach to operations, leadership and safety across all three service pillars. It also supports a broader goal of expanding capability in remote and underserved coastal communities, where strong local leadership, supported by prevention programmes and lifeguarding presence, is essential.

By investing in people in this way, we are not only training coxswains, but we are also strengthening a connected system of community programmes, lifeguarding and rescue, ensuring that from prevention to response, we continue to save lives, change lives and create futures.



Watch '[Rising with the Tide](#)'.



Read more about the [two-week coxswains training](#) on our website.

Our strategy and performance continued

Developing and sustaining our people for the future continued

Sustaining our volunteer model

Volunteers are recruited locally through targeted station drives aligned to operational needs. The VSC ensures smooth coordination across operations and community-facing programmes.

Volunteer base			
1 262 operational	135 affiliates	169 community programme instructors	284 seasonal lifeguards and team managers for 2025/26 season

Recruitment of volunteers remains challenging, especially in rural areas, with an attrition rate of approximately 50% within five years of joining. By conducting exit interviews, we determined that the most common reasons for leaving the NSRI include emigration, changing family or work commitments and, occasionally, interpersonal challenges.



Our investment in skills development and training aims to support individual career progression for employees and volunteers, improve service delivery and enhance organisational performance.

In 2025, 746 members passed through core NSRI training courses, supported by the appointment of four new training officers and two additional South African Maritime Safety Authority-qualified examiners. This strengthened assessment capacity across key categories, reducing key-person dependency risk. The decentralised, station-level training model was further embedded with closer collaboration between training officers and stations, producing measurable increases in training hours, attendance and competency outcomes.

Volunteer training

Guided by the motto, “train as you would respond to a rescue and respond as you were trained”, our volunteer training programme ensures crew are prepared for real-world operations through a structured model:

Theory	Practical	Experiential
Delivered via our internal e-learning platform	Tracked through task books and operational logbooks	Developed through scenario-based exercises and training in real-life conditions

All stations are equipped to provide foundational training, while specialised training and assessment are delivered centrally by the VSC.

The updated search and rescue protocols introduced in 2024, alongside specialist courses and inland flood and swiftwater rescue training, continue to improve rescue outcomes and operational readiness in diverse environments.

In 2025, we further improved our training and operations capability by establishing a new training team drawn from our volunteer cohort. With operational experience, the team is improving feedback and VSC responsiveness by strengthening delivery of preventative maintenance, IT support and administrative issue resolution at stations.

Coxswain development

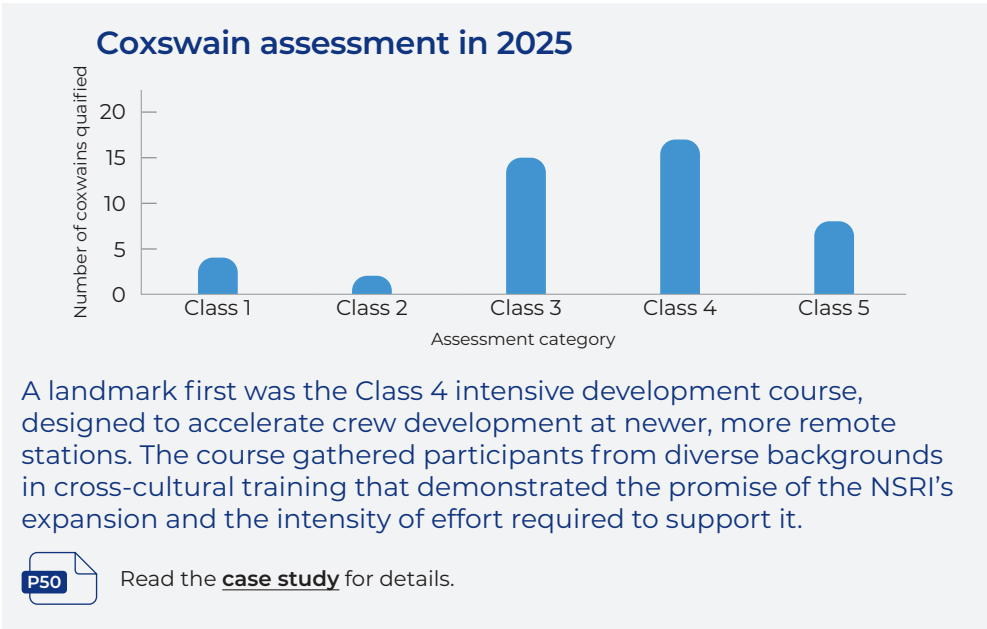
The development of coxswains remains a strategic priority, critical to the sustainability of our rescue operations. As trainees accumulate practical time on an ORC, the pool of qualifying coxswains continues to grow. We are equipping them to lead under pressure and adapt to evolving technologies.

In 2025, 46 new coxswains qualified, and 38 trainees participated in formal Class 1 to 3 development courses.

Coxswains
384
(2024: 351)

38 trainees
participated in
formal Class 1 to 3
development
courses.

Two
South African
Maritime Safety
Authority-accredited
examiners



Our strategy and performance continued

Developing and sustaining our people for the future continued

Lifeguard empowerment

Registered with the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority, our lifeguard training aligns with South African Qualifications Authority standards.

In areas where our lifeguarding programme is well established, we promote experienced lifeguards into leadership roles through structured development and mentorship. This approach strengthens local leadership, supports operational continuity and reduces training costs. Training is tracked in real time using the Surf Rescue app, enabling effective monitoring, timely adjustments and accurate record-keeping.

In 2025, we began a new programme to train commercial lifeguards and build a recruitment pipeline, with tiered qualifications and bespoke standard operating procedures. This is in preparation for Club Med Tinley Manor's July 2026 opening.



Foster organisational culture and transformation

In 2025, an organisational development and innovation process across all functions changed how the NSRI structures, develops and supports our workforce.

Restructuring and realignment

We improved accountability and enhanced efficiency by restructuring and realigning executive, operations, finance, fundraising and marketing roles. The fundraising and marketing restructure clarified general fundraising, centre operations, performance marketing, brand and retail accountabilities.

Job profile development

In partnership with a remuneration and human resources consultancy, we created fit-for-purpose job profiles, aligned with operational realities and strategic objectives. This provides consistency in job language and expectations, supports internal equity and market-aligned remuneration, and creates a transparent foundation for performance management.

Middle management leadership development

We performed individual and team assessments, followed by management workshops, to align leadership behaviours with organisational values.

Performance management framework

We piloted interim performance reviews across grades C3 to D and finalised executive performance agreements to align individual development and team goals with strategic outcomes.

Skills audits

We conducted an audit of all employees' skills to inform learning and development plans.

Transformation progress

The NSRI continually addresses historical inequities in South Africa by promoting equality, non-racialism and gender equity through inclusive practices and initiatives. The growth of our workforce represents incremental gains in the representation of historically disadvantaged people.

Employees

The NSRI continued to make meaningful progress in building a more representative and inclusive workforce in 2025. Black (African, Coloured and Indian as defined by the Department of Trade and Industry B-BBEE Commission) representation among employees increased to 53%, up from 49% in 2023, reflecting consistent gains in recruitment and retention of historically disadvantaged individuals. Among this year's 34 recruits, 91% were from government-designated groups, demonstrating alignment with the organisation's employment equity and transformation objectives.



▶ Watch the 'Women in Sea Rescue' series.

Volunteers

The volunteer workforce grew to 1 566 members in 2025, an increase of 14% from 1 376 in 2023. Black representation among volunteers rose to 18%, up from 14% in 2023, with notable growth in African volunteer numbers (from 78 to 136, a 74% increase over two years). Women represent 30% of our volunteers, up from 27% in 2023, with an increasing number of women taking on leadership roles. When benchmarked against international peers, the NSRI consistently outperforms on female representation, reflecting an organisational culture that actively supports gender equity across all functions.

A more representative workforce strengthens the NSRI's presence and trust in communities where drowning risk is highest. Diverse crews open doors for water safety education, local recruitment and community resilience. Each step towards inclusion multiplies the organisation's reach, ensuring that the lifesaving mission connects with those who need it most.

Balance delivery and well-being

Acknowledging the personal impact of rescue work, we partner with Life Healthcare to provide free access to a comprehensive wellness programme that includes trauma counselling, mental health support and confidential assistance services for volunteers, staff and their families.

Our culture of care, responsibility and transparency helps mitigate safety risk. Regular broadcasts to stations disseminate lessons on injury prevention, the use of PPE and the significance of reporting incidents and near misses.

Remuneration

Our remuneration policy promotes employment equity, including fair and responsible pay practices. It is supported by annual market benchmarking via a survey done by a remuneration and human resources consultancy and independently validated job grading. We monitor management objectives regularly to ensure delivery aligns with strategic goals and informs the organisation's operational plan.

Our volunteers are not paid but may claim operational expenses. Our call centre team continues to operate under a performance-driven model, with fundraisers earning commission based on individual and team results. This incentivises high performance and helps secure funding.

Our strategy and performance continued

Developing and sustaining our people for the future continued

Total employee costs for 2025 amounted to **R105 505 838**, an increase of 3.7% from R101 711 484 in 2024. The table below reflects the distribution across divisions (excludes lifeguarding).

Division	2025 Expenditure (R)	% of total	Headcount*
Fundraising and marketing	53 521 813	53	103
Operations	29 836 935	29	62
Corporate services	18 349 348	18	24
Total**	101 708 095***	100	189

* Headcount at 31 December 2025 and includes executives.

** Excludes lifeguards, who are employed on temporary contracts.

*** Restated due to rounding variances.

The NSRI's Non-executive Directors are unpaid volunteers.

Executive remuneration

Total executive remuneration decreased from R11 923 220 in 2024 to R8 263 886 in 2025. The year-on-year decrease reflects changes in the composition of the executive team during 2024 and 2025. The CEO received total remuneration of R3 184 525.

The remuneration ratio between the CEO and the lowest-paid employee is 18:1, while the ratio relative to that of the median (C4 band) employee is 5:1. Information about post-retirement benefit liabilities and executive remuneration is available in our 2025 Annual Financial Statements, available on request from the NSRI.

During the year, the Board approved the discontinuation of performance-based incentives for executives. This decision reflects a continued commitment to responsible remuneration practices, organisational sustainability and alignment with the NSRI's public-benefit mandate.



Our strategy and performance continued

Investing in best-in-class rescue assets and infrastructure

Every new rescue base, every vessel launched, and every piece of equipment deployed extends the geographic and operational reach of the NSRI’s lifesaving capability.



How we create and preserve value

Our manufactured capital comprises physical assets, including rescue bases, vessels, equipment and technology, that enable the effective, fast delivery of our services.

We ensure world-class operational capability by striving for operational excellence and exemplary readiness standards, leveraging emerging technologies as a strategic priority to support insight-driven management and innovation.

Our assets need to remain fit for purpose, in working order and modern. We invest in:

- Expanding the reach of our safety beach cameras.
- Improving communication and radio systems.
- Facilitating the construction of new rescue vessels as required by expansion or replacement programmes.
- Creating new facilities, as identified by operational requirements, either by construction, acquisition or long-term leases.
- Maintaining rescue stations and vessels designed for future service.
- Improving and implementing the modular Survival Swimming Centres, aiming for decentralised ownership and maintenance.

The ORC fleet renewal programme, at approximately R26 million per vessel with a 40-year working lifespan, represents a generational investment in manufactured capital funded through the Launch a Legacy campaign.

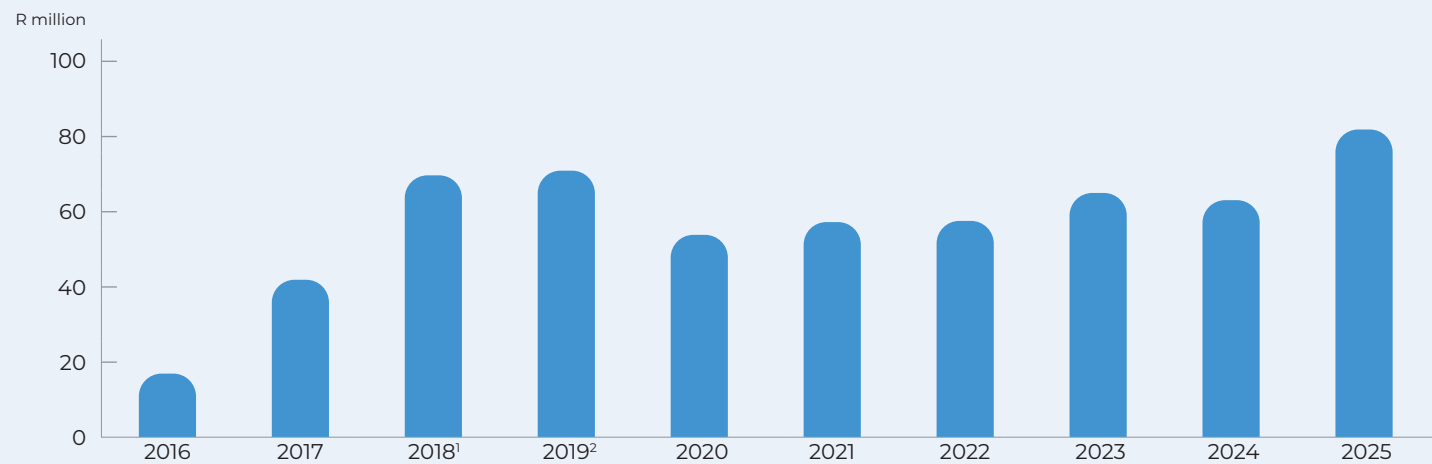
Value created and preserved over time

Key metrics tracking our performance	2025	2024	2023
Vehicles	115	105	104
Vessels	116	114	111
Rescue stations	59	59	57
Survival Swimming Centres	4	4	4
Number of beach safety cameras	11	6	6
PRB locations	2 063	1 996	1 813



The **PRB programme** forms part of our community programmes and is discussed in detail in the communities section.

Capital expenditure 10-year trend



¹ Includes call centre acquisition.

² Includes VSC acquisition at 2 Longclaw Drive in Cape Town.

Our strategy and performance continued

Investing in best-in-class rescue assets and infrastructure continued

Performance highlights				
Value of all NSRI assets	Maintenance of assets	Capital investment in buildings	Capital investment in fleet (vessels and vehicles)	Fleet renewal programme
R456.7 million (2024: R390.8 million)	R13.6 million (2024: R12.2 million)	R38.9 million (2024: R32.2 million)	R32.8 million (2024: R28.5 million)	>R300 million over eight years
Challenges impacting our performance		Focus areas in 2026		
- Reactive maintenance stretches budgets at older stations. - Power constraints affect base operations and communication infrastructure. - Some station infrastructure is still dependent on third-party landlords, limiting upgrades. - Lack of long-range connectivity negatively impacts effective communications during rescue missions.		- Replace the SafeTRX platform with a custom-built NSRI app to enhance public engagement, donor loyalty features and improve beach and coastal safety tools. - Continue to manage at least four major initiatives simultaneously across our footprint to ensure technology investments drive measurable impact for volunteers and donors without compromising quality or focus.		

 Read about the [fundraising partnerships](#) we secured to support asset investment.



Our strategy and performance continued



CASE STUDY



Extending our reach inland: Building rescue capability where it did not exist

For many years, rescue operations on inland waters in South Africa were limited. In some areas, they were simply not possible. Now, that is changing.

The NSRI's inland stations have extended our reach beyond the coastline, bringing highly trained crews and rescue capability to communities where help was previously uncertain. These stations are an essential part of our national footprint, improving response times and giving people a far greater chance of survival. Station 35 Witbank Dam is one example of this impact.

Formed in 2014 after a fatal boating accident highlighted the need for inland rescue at Station 35 Witbank Dam, the station began with a small group of volunteers and limited resources. In December 2025, the crew moved into their dedicated rescue base. This marked an important step forward in strengthening readiness, coordination and long-term presence in the region. The base provides secure storage for rescue craft and equipment and serves as a central point for responding to emergencies. More importantly, it supports the volunteers who bring the station to life, giving structure to their work and strengthening their ability to serve their community.

This capability was demonstrated during a dramatic rescue at Grootdraai Dam. During the peak holiday season, four men were stranded in the water, clinging to a ski boat balancing on the edge of the dam's spillway. Below them, water dropped more than 40 metres into the Vaal River. The position was unstable and extremely dangerous because the wind and current were pushing directly towards the edge. Local responders were on scene, but the conditions, their lack of equipment and training made a safe rescue impossible. When the call reached Station 35 Witbank Dam, three volunteers responded immediately, leaving family commitments and travelling nearly two hours to reach the scene. On arrival, they launched into challenging conditions and navigated towards the spillway in complete darkness. The situation required calm judgement. The coxswain adjusted their approach to maintain control of the rescue craft in the wind and current. Working together, they deployed a line to the four men and instructed them to hold on. With all four secured, the crew applied steady power and pulled them clear of the spillway, away from the drop. Within minutes, the men were out of danger and brought safely to shore. They were very cold, shaken and exhausted, but alive. For the volunteers, the rescue was what they do. Within a few hours of the rescue, they had returned home and by the next day, they were back at work, as if nothing had happened.

This is the reality of an inland rescue. It depends on highly trained volunteers, supported by the right equipment and infrastructure, who can respond quickly and operate in high-risk environments. It also shows the importance of having the capability close to where incidents happen.

The NSRI's inland stations are doing more than responding to emergencies. They are building local resilience, strengthening communities and ensuring that fewer people are beyond the reach of rescue.

One station, built through commitment and support, is saving lives that may otherwise have been lost.



Watch the [Grootdraai Dam rescue](#).



Read more about the [new rescue base at Station 35](#) on our website.

Our strategy and performance continued

Investing in best-in-class rescue assets and infrastructure continued

Assets

Our pace of investment into station infrastructure has continued into 2025. The Class 1 fleet replacement programme is on track to be completed by Q3 2026 – with the completion of both rescue station construction and accompanying ORC for Station 4 Mykonos and Station 8 Hout Bay. This will mean that eight of our 10 Class 1 craft are now less than eight years old, effectively having replaced all of our early-1980s Brede-class vessels.

Beyond the large offshore vessel programme, investigations and investments continued afoot at various locations to prudently assess where we can offer our services for maximum effect. Often missed as “business as usual”, increased maintenance attention and spend have resulted in refurbishments/major maintenance attention at many stations. Notably, significant work was carried out at Station 5 Durban, Station 9 Gordon’s Bay, Station 15 Mossel Bay, Station 16 Strandfontein, Station 19 Richards Bay, Station 41 Ballito, as well as at Station 47 Kei Mouth. However, at least every station and facility received some kind of maintenance attention during the year.

In 2025, we listed the first new purpose-built inland rescue station in Witbank. Investigative work for future base builds also took place for Station 2 Bakoven, Station 9 Gordons Bay, Station 16 False Bay, Station 37 Jeffreys Bay, Station 39 Rocky Bay, Station 42 Kleinmond, Station 47 Kei Mouth, Station 49 Mdumbi and Station 51 Gariep Dam.

New satellite stations opened at Fish Hoek (Station 10 Simon’s Town) and Eersterivier (Station 36 Oyster Bay), while Kenton-on-Sea (Station 11 Port Alfred) and Nature’s Valley (Station 14 Plettenberg Bay) also expanded our footprint. Jet-powered rigid inflatable boats (JetRIBs) were allocated at all these satellite stations. Active investigations are underway for build projects at Kenton-on-Sea, Nature’s Valley and at existing satellite sites at Sedgfield in the coming years.

Three stations (Station 44 St Helena Bay, Station 46 Storms River (which were satellite stations in 2024) and Station 49 Mdumbi (an auxiliary station in 2024) came online as fully independent operational stations, reflecting our deliberate expansion into previously underserved areas. We made a strategic decision to focus on developing Station 49 Mdumbi as a flagship location covering the important, geographically exposed Wild Coast between East London and Port Edward, downscaling operations at Station 28 Port St Johns, which is currently in auxiliary status. We also rationalised our resource allocation at various other stations, for example, moving Station 45 Matzikama to a dedicated lifeguard operation.



Station infrastructure	2025	2024	2023	Trend
Rescue bases	59	59	57	↔
Rescue stations	43	46	46	↓
Auxiliary stations (in development without vessels)	3	5	5	↓
Satellite stations	13	8	8	↑
Drowning prevention (extension of an established station with a vessel)				
Survival Swimming Centres	4	4	4	↔
Beach safety cameras	11	6	6	↑
Rescue assets				
Rescue vessels	116	114	110	↑
Class 1: all-weather rescue vessels designed to operate more than 50 nautical miles offshore	10	10	10	↔
Class 2: Rigid inflatable boats (RIBs) exceeding 10 m in length and fitted with a cabin	3	3	2	↔
Class 3: large RIBs from 7.3 m to 8.8 m in length	21	21	21	↔
Class 3: smaller RIBs from 5.5 m to 6.5 m in length	25	25	25	↔
Class 4: RIBs less than 5 m in length (and JetRIBs)	57 (45)	55 (40)	50 (35)	↑ (↑)
Vehicles (mobiles, tractors, quads/all-terrain vehicles)	115 (72, 24, 19)	105	104	↑

Assets value

Asset allocation	As at 31 December 2025	Percentage of total non-current assets value	As at 31 December 2024	Percentage of total non-current assets value
Land, building and investment properties	R152 186 012	45%	R149 348 984	45%
Vessels	R152 465 133	45%	R155 263 853	46%
Vehicles	R23 954 307	7%	R22 879 711	7%
Equipment	R6 335 612	2%	R6 998 951	2%
Other financial assets	R163 453	0%	R238 893	0%
Total non-current assets excluding other financial assets	R335 104 517	100%*	R334 730 392	100%

* Restated due to rounding variances.

Our strategy and performance continued

Investing in best-in-class rescue assets and infrastructure continued

Fleet renewal and maintenance

The ORC fleet renewal programme is modernising the NSRI's rescue capability. These self-righting, purpose-built vessels are designed to operate 50 nautical miles offshore and beyond, replacing 1980s-era craft and fundamentally upgrading the NSRI's Class 1 capability.

Advanced **14 m ORCs** are now operational at stations from Station 5 Durban to Station 19 Richards Bay, Station 10 Simon's Town, Station 17 Hermanus, Station 6 Gqeberha and Station 3 Table Bay.

Hull 7 (destined for Station 4 Mykonos) reached **75%** completion at Two Oceans Marine in Parow and was planned for delivery in April 2026.

Hull 8 (for Station 8 Hout Bay) is **on schedule** for delivery in August 2026.

Alongside the ORC renewal programme, we keep existing assets operational with extensive fleet maintenance and refurbishment, including refits on five rescue vessels (engine and gearbox replacements) and navigation system upgrades. Rescue 19A underwent major refurbishment, Rescue 18 was re-engined, and new JetRIBs were delivered to four stations.

The year also saw several official vessel and station blessings, including the *Film Industry Fund Rescuer III* at Station 16 Strandfontein, the *Spirit of Santam III* at Station 5 Durban, the JetRIB *Janine* at Station 34 Yzerfontein, the *Bay Guardian* ORC at Station 6 Gqeberha, and the *Spirit of St Francis III* & *Spirit of ScottSam*, as well as the upgraded station facilities at Station 21 St Francis Bay. These events recognised the generous support of donors, volunteers and communities whose contributions make these lifesaving assets possible.

We reinforced technology infrastructure, which supports our stations, by upgrading communication systems with the expansion of satellite radio range and the implementation of the Halo Radio system improving real-time coordination across the NSRI's footprint.

Deployment of 11 beach safety camera systems, managed by eight dedicated volunteers, added a surveillance and early-warning layer at high-traffic beach areas.



Major infrastructure projects

We demonstrate our commitment to world-class rescue readiness and responsible stewardship of donor-funded resources through significant capital investment and operational capability enhancement.

Station 4 Mykonos

We completed construction at the end of February 2026 so that the station could take delivery of a new ORC vessel.

Station 8 Hout Bay

The reconstruction of the demolished station began in August, with completion scheduled for the end of July 2026. We appointed a Community Liaison Officer to improve site access control and create local employment opportunities while construction is underway.

Station 9 Gordon's Bay

We completed alterations in October 2025, improving ablution and storage facilities.

Kenton-on-Sea satellite station

Building plans for a new boathouse at Kenton-on-Sea (Station 11 Port Alfred) for the station await municipal approval. The new station will house a JetRIB and rescue vehicle to significantly improve response times.

Station 16 Strandfontein

We appointed an architect, quantity surveyor and structural engineer for the construction of the station, with a lease from the City of Cape Town agreed in-principle.

Fish Hoek Beach Sports Club satellite station

The new satellite station was commissioned.

Nature's Valley satellite station

This community will be served by the site we identified, with in-principle approval from Bitou Municipality. Conversations with local stakeholders continue.

Emergency Operations Centre

Upgrades helped improve monitoring, operational capability and workspace ergonomics.

Volunteer Support Centre

Funded by the sale of the Glengariff property, improvements created on-site accommodation for up to 10 visiting employees and volunteers.

Our strategy and performance continued

Building trust, collaboration and community resilience

Each relationship nurtured creates a multiplying effect – one corporate partnership funds vessels that save lives, generating stories that attract more donors, who fund more programmes, creating an ever-expanding circle of impact.



How we create and preserve value

The relationships, trust and shared value the NSRI builds with stakeholders strengthens water safety and rescue efforts. Our activities have a significant economic and social impact in the areas where we operate – supporting industries, businesses and communities alike.

As a strategic priority, we aim to engage with donors and other stakeholders to strengthen our brand, uphold our reputation and serve our communities with unwavering commitment. We do this by investing in:

Community programmes, particularly in under-resourced and remote areas, to expand water safety education, survival swimming instruction, monitoring PRBs and operating remote beach safety cameras beyond rescue operations.

Expanding our partnerships with research institutions, municipalities and local communities for public benefit.

Sustaining corporate and donor relationships through transparent and impactful reporting, personalised and innovative fundraising campaigns, and legacy building.

Amplifying our brand to reinforce public trust and recognition through consistent service delivery, rescue outcomes, grassroots education initiatives and targeted awareness campaigns.

Creating a future pipeline of skilled, community-based rescuers and educators, especially in underserved communities.

Value created and preserved over time

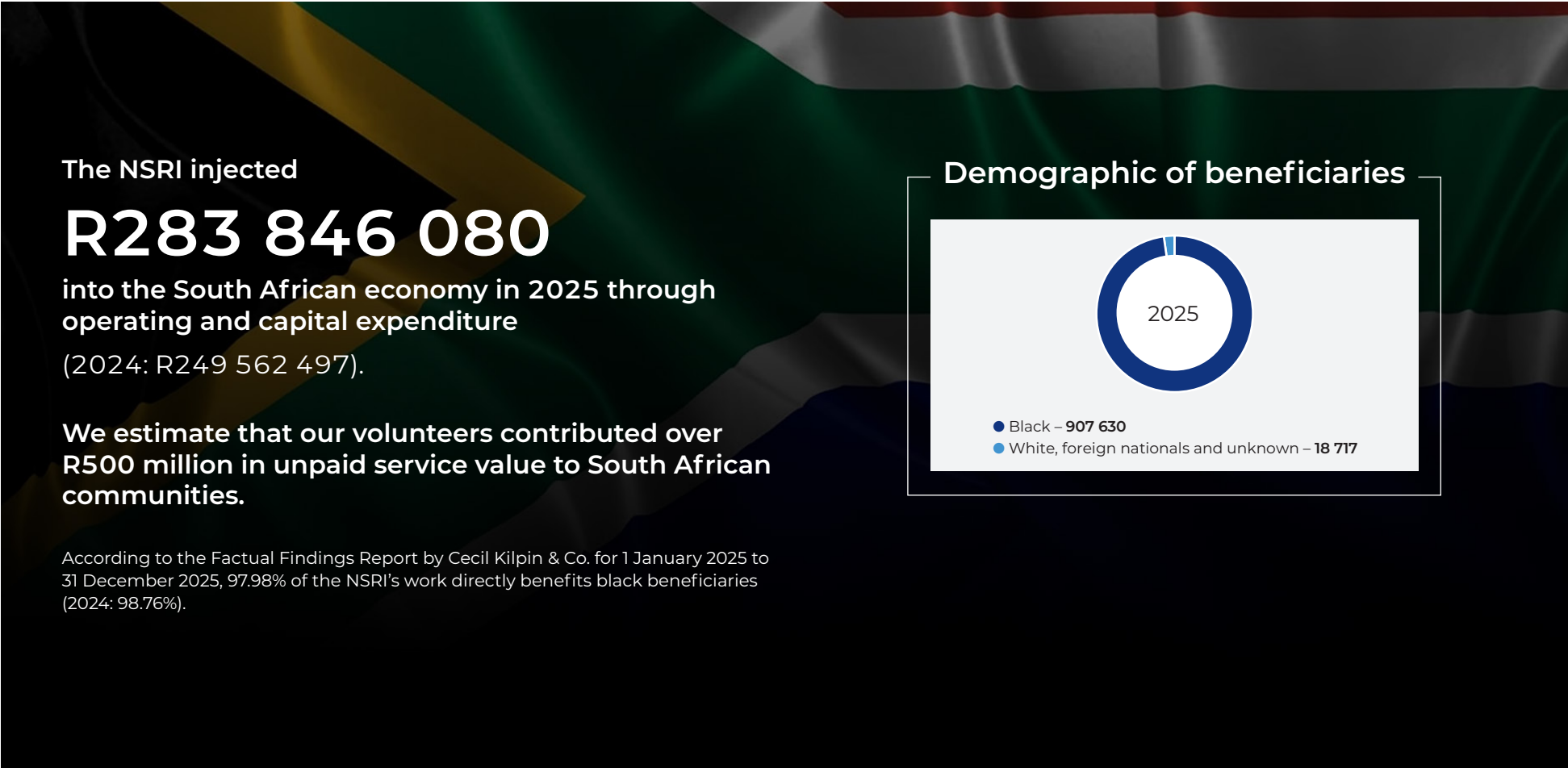
Key metrics tracking our performance	2025	2024	2023
Media exposure			
YouTube views	7 864 340	2 136 529	518 145
YouTube watching hours	43 052	26 400	5 000
Articles published by media (non-paid)	5 017	5 628	3 910
Training impact			
BravoBravo Training Academy participants	17 042	15 728	12 589
Survival swimming lessons	25 043	25 588	17 998
Cumulative lives saved using a PRB	239	206	176

Performance highlights		Challenges impacting our performance	Focus areas in 2026
Learners who received water safety education 899 756 (2024: 877 485)	People rescued 1 548 (2024: 1 629)	- Rural and inland communities where some areas remain underserved have limited awareness of drowning prevention, what we do and how we can help. - We face Protection of Personal Information Act, 4 of 2013 (POPIA) compliance risks if not consistently managed across all channels. - There is a risk of misinformation and brand misrepresentation during crisis events.	- Leverage the NSRI's reputation and public trust to attract new supporters, volunteers and partners. - Use data-driven insights to better measure and communicate social impact and the value of donor contributions.
Seasonal lifeguards employed 284 (2024: 270) providing youth employment and economic support	Partnerships Seven municipalities to provide lifeguard services at 55 locations (2024: 8 and 50)		

Our strategy and performance continued

Building trust, collaboration and community resilience continued

Contributing to South Africa's economy



The NSRI also plays a vital role in safeguarding key sectors of the South African economy, particularly tourism and the commercial fishing industry, by providing reliable maritime rescue services, preventative support and emergency medical response. From protecting visitors at coastal hotspots to assisting fishing vessels operating in challenging offshore environments, our presence fosters trust and supports operational confidence for those working on or near water.

In 2025, our crews conducted **63** medevacs from tourist vessels and working boats, often under challenging conditions.



Social media

Our presence on social media is one of the many avenues we use to build trust in the communities we serve.

Major campaigns that achieved exceptional visibility alongside YouTube videos, exceeding one million viewers globally, include:



Time to Change the Score
Learn more about this campaign.



World Drowning Prevention Day
Learn more about this campaign.



Women in Sea Rescue
Watch the 'Women in Sea Rescue'.

Our strategy and performance continued



CASE STUDY



Building sustainable rescue capability: From community initiative to operational station

On the morning of its official launch, the NSRI Station 49 Mdumbi volunteers were already doing what they were trained to do. Before the ceremony began, a 67-year-old surfer was separated from his board in heavy surf. Two volunteers, out training on their JetRIB, quickly switched to rescue mode and, within minutes, brought him safely to shore. It was a clear demonstration of why this station matters.

This moment captured the purpose of the new rescue station, building rescue capability where it previously did not exist and ensuring help is close when needed. Mdumbi lies along a remote stretch of the Eastern Cape coastline, and for many years, formal rescue services in this area were limited. The development of Station 49 is part of our broader strategy to extend coverage to underserved communities and improve water safety along the coastline. A key part of this development has been collaboration. Working with the Nyandeni Local Municipality, we helped establish a framework to support both operations and long-term sustainability. The municipality has committed to land, authorisation and local governance support and the NSRI contributed training, equipment and operational systems. This partnership reflects a practical approach where a rescue came first, followed by formal agreements that support continued growth.

The station's story began in 2020, when a volunteer trainer started teaching local youth lifeguarding skills in informal conditions. A small initiative has grown into a structured volunteer team with the training, equipment and support needed to operate as a fully fledged rescue station. Today, the station is equipped with a JetRIB and a 4x4 rescue vehicle. This enables the crew to respond to incidents along this section of the coast quickly and with confidence. The station is led by a multi-skilled volunteer team, with responsibilities shared across administration, operations, training and water safety education for the children in the area. This structure supports continuity and builds leadership within the community.

The impact of establishing this station is both immediate and long term. In the short term, lives can be saved. The rescue on the morning of the launch showed that trained local volunteers, supported by the right equipment, can respond effectively, even in challenging conditions.

Over time, the station will strengthen safety in the area through ongoing training, lifeguarding and water safety education. It also creates opportunities for skills development and local involvement in rescue services. The next phase is the construction of a permanent rescue base. This will provide secure storage for equipment, a central operations hub and a foundation for expanding training programmes in the region.

Station 49 Mdumbi shows what can be achieved through sustained effort and partnership. A grassroots initiative has developed into an operational rescue station, built around local people and supported by national systems. It is a model that can be applied in other remote areas.

By building capability in this way, we are not only extending our reach, but strengthening the connected NSRI system of prevention, lifeguarding presence and rescue response. Together, these elements ensure that safety begins long before an incident occurs and that, when it does occur, trained teams are ready to act. The result is a more resilient approach to water safety that protects lives today and builds safer communities into the future.



Read more about [Mdumbi Station 49](#) on our website.



Our strategy and performance continued

Building trust, collaboration and community resilience continued

Community programmes

Our community programmes include water safety education, survival swimming, the PRB programme and drowning prevention research. Despite seasonal and infrastructure challenges, donor funding enabled targeted drowning prevention interventions in high-risk coastal, inland, rural and underserved communities.

Key investments strengthened leadership and delivery capacity, advanced donor-funded projects such as the **Fisherfolk** and Drakenstein Lifeguard Training initiatives, and expanded partnerships with municipalities, NGOs and community organisations.

We also launched an initiative to inspect and rate venues for water-related activities to improve drowning prevention alongside individual education.

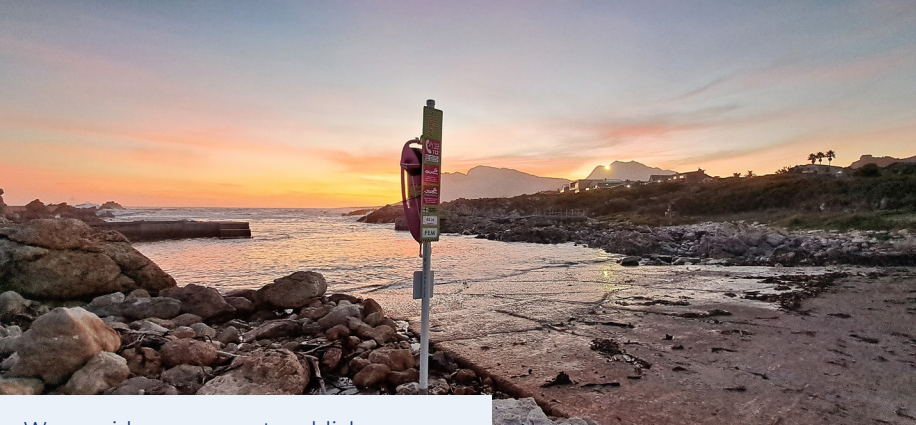
Our survival swimming training content is under development for 2026 delivery to ensure the programme stays current and evidence-based.



Over the year, our water safety education lessons and survival swimming lessons directly improved skills, awareness and safety outcomes. We use community-based infrastructure to overcome access constraints. This includes survival swimming containers located on school premises, enabling year-round, timetable-aligned lessons, while volunteer-led sites operate across six provinces.

▶ Watch the story of our **Steilhoogte Survival Swimming Centre**.

Projects that support our innovation towards safety
- Two new videos educate people on child resuscitation and the importance of actively supervising children around water.
- The beach safety camera communications, including weather warnings, provide enhanced public awareness and prevention messaging throughout the year.
- Multilingual station recruitment advertisements expand our reach into previously underserved communities.
- The BravoBravo online course for parents was launched.



We provide permanent, publicly accessible safety assets through our PRB programme at known high-risk water sites.

▶ Watch how a Good Samaritan saves lives using a **Pink Rescue Buoy**.

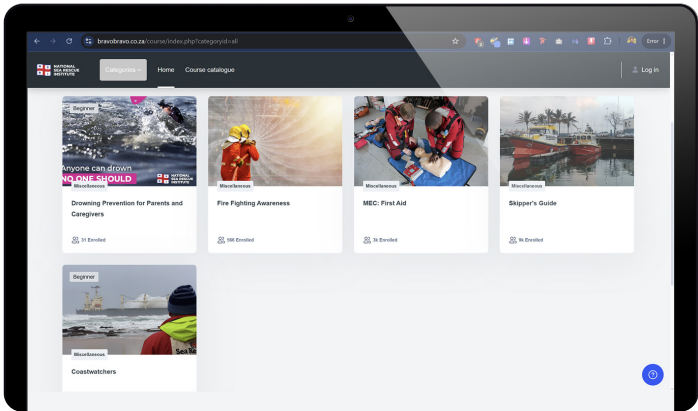
BravoBravo

Launched on World Drowning Prevention Day, the BravoBravo online course for parents provides accessible digital water safety education beyond physical programme delivery.

The e-learning platform continued to deliver seamanship and water safety training at scale, and the first aid course was developed to draft completion with a learner manual, task book and assessments ready for Quality Council for Trades and Occupations accreditation and public training rollout.

PRB programme

The programme remains a cornerstone of the NSRI's drowning prevention strategy. During the year, the programme reached a milestone of 239 lives saved, highlighting its critical role in enabling rapid bystander intervention during drowning-in-progress incidents.



To date	2025
2 063 buoys have been placed along South Africa's coastlines, dams and rivers	191 new PRBs deployed (2024: 183)
239 lives saved with R4.6 million invested at an average cost of R19 246 per successful rescue, this is a remarkable return on investment in human terms	PRBs enabled 32 confirmed rescues performed by bystanders, with no reported injuries (2024: 30)

All PRBs were fully sponsored by individual and corporate donors
Each PRB installation (comprising a buoy, pole and signage) costs approximately R2 000



We continue to foster community stewardship to reduce theft and enhance PRB availability. This includes raising public awareness, engaging with local volunteers and exploring new technologies such as integrating PRBs with beach safety cameras and using smart sensors to trigger real-time alerts when a buoy is removed.

We are also undertaking a descriptive study of the PRB programme to track demographics, incident details and utilisation patterns since 2017.

Our strategy and performance continued

Building trust, collaboration and community resilience continued

Collaborating to save more lives

Notable developments in the NSRI's partnership ecosystem during the year included:

Eastern Cape government departments	We received a letter of intent to integrate drowning prevention education into the curriculum.
uShaka Marine World	We collaborated with uShaka Marine World to engage with 5 078 people in Sodwana Bay.
Durban Metro Police	We partnered with the officers to create public awareness at the Inanda Dam.
South African National Parks (SANParks)	This partnership received a Kudu Award for the Station 46 Storms River, which responded to 37 incidents over 18 months and trained 18 SANParks Rangers, with one ranger qualifying as active crew and progressing towards coxswain status.
Corporate volunteer programme	The new programme helps us expand our reach and embed drowning prevention awareness into new workplaces and community networks. We received commitments from companies for their employees to be trained as classroom-based water safety educators.
Spirit of Ubuntu	This initiative emerged as a significant new fundraising and engagement platform in 2025. With over 65 executive engagements conducted and Italtile confirmed as the first R1 million sponsor, this initiative represents a new model for high-value corporate engagement that connects South Africa's business community with NSRI's mission at the executive level.



By choosing NSRI branded supporter gear, you can make a real impact.
It's not just about looking good – it's about supporting a lifesaving cause. Every item purchased helps fund the protective gear that NSRI volunteers need to continue their selfless work.

 Shop our **supporter gear** here.

Contributing to research and thought leadership

We are committed to deepening our understanding of drowning epidemiology to ensure that prevention efforts are guided by evidence rather than assumptions. Our relationships with universities and both local and international search and rescue teams contribute to the direct application of research and alignment with global best practice. These relationships enhance legitimacy and advance collective knowledge to improve the global response to rescue and drowning prevention.

We contribute to the International Maritime Rescue Federation’s Climate and Future of Search and Rescue guide. We continued our work with the University of Cape Town, the University of Stellenbosch, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and Plymouth University.

The Fisherfolk Community Project, funded by the Lloyds Register Foundation, identified that 1 477 annual drowning deaths occur in South Africa, with a disproportionate impact on marginalised fishing communities. The study recommended structured adult swimming lessons, targeted awareness campaigns and provision of safety equipment. These findings directly inform the NSRI’s community programme strategy.

 Read more about our [data-driven stakeholder engagement and decision-making](#).

Fundraising partnerships

The following new and established partnership agreements were cemented in the last year:

Suzuki Auto South Africa	Oceana	Santam	The Rotary Wine Auction	A Western Cape Disaster Management grant of R408 000 enabled swiftwater training and provided JetRIB Janine for Station 34 Yzerfontein.
New agreement to supply four Jimnys as prizes and four loaned promotional vehicles for the Cars4Good 2026 campaign.	After 23 years, extended their support by introducing an annual industry golf day in honour of NSRI.	Extended their support by sponsoring their third JetRIB, Spirit of Santam III, for Station 5 Durban.	Proceeds of the 27th annual auction funded a new JetRIB, Rotarian Wares, for Station 16 Strandfontein.	

Youth development

Lifeguarding continues to be a crucial avenue for youth development, training and employment in under-resourced coastal communities. These initiatives promote drowning prevention and equip young people with lifesaving qualifications, leadership experience and employment opportunities – strengthening ties with local communities and enhancing long-term social resilience. In efforts to encourage careers in the maritime industry, the NSRI sponsors two bursary students at the Lawhill Maritime Centre at Simon’s Town School.



Our strategy and performance continued

Innovating towards safety

Technology innovation amplifies every aspect of our mission. Each innovation compounds – better data leads to better programmes and campaigns, which save more lives and attract more supporters, driving a continuous cycle of improvement and impact.



How we create and preserve value

Our collective knowledge, systems, technology and institutional learning enhance the NSRI's operational effectiveness. This enables us to drive innovation to create a water-safe nation using new approaches, technologies and programmes that improve prevention, response and awareness.

As a strategic priority, we are investing in capability, technology and modernising our systems by:

- Strengthening digital infrastructure and processes, including the EOC and a suite of rescue communication systems.
- Leveraging technology and partnerships to drive efficiency and data-driven decision-making.
- Building on existing initiatives like the NSRI volunteer portal, SafeTRX, the lifeguarding model, Survival Swimming Centres, PRBs, beach safety cameras, equipment, vessels and training platforms.

 Our innovation towards safety is supported by our community programmes, including BravoBravo, the beach safety camera series and educational material.

Value created and preserved over time

Key metrics tracking our performance	2025	2024	2023
SafeTRX subscriptions	26 055	22 845	20 129
ICT spend as a percentage of revenue, excluding capital (within international benchmarks of 3% to 5%)	R10 765 789 (4.9%)	R8 854 329 (4.4%)	*

* No comparative information is available for 2023 due to the change in financial reporting processes.

Performance highlights

Streamlined data collection

Combining fundraising, marketing and operational information to provide a clear, up-to-date view of our work and performance.

Strengthening drowning data

Co-hosted a national stakeholder workshop to advance the need for a reliable drowning data system to inform prevention, research and policy.

Challenges impacting our performance

- Cybersecurity threats remain a critical concern, flagged as a top 10 risk.
- Legacy systems in some areas reduce efficiency and increase training complexity.
- Potential over-reliance on goodwill and institutional memory not always codified.
- Talent loss risk due to retirements or insufficient documentation of key knowledge.

Focus areas in 2026

- Replace the SafeTRX platform with a custom-built NSRI app to enhance public engagement and donor loyalty through beach and coastal safety tools.
- Develop the marketing campaign automation platform to enable data-driven, personalised engagement with donors and volunteers, improving retention and conversion.
- Redesign fundraising list and lead management processes to create dynamic calling lists and improve donor engagement, contact centre efficiency and conversion.
- Strengthen cybersecurity capability to detect, prevent and respond to cyber threats, and protect sensitive donor, volunteer and organisational data.
- Develop advanced retail analytics to improve business insight, stock management and sales performance across channels, completing the final phase of retail modernisation.
- Re-engineer the credit card payments process to support regulatory compliance, payment governance and more efficient fundraising administration.
- Bring e-learning capability in-house to improve the accessibility, scalability and consistency of volunteer and staff training, with access to blended learning across regions.
- Develop a community programmes app to improve data capture, reporting and activity coordination, while supporting donor reporting and funder outcomes.
- Continue modernising operational asset management systems to improve accountability, lifecycle management and maintenance tracking for rescue craft, vehicles and equipment.
- Streamline workflows and strengthen data-driven management through focused finance and human resource system enhancements, integrating back-office processes and improving operational efficiency.

See our equipment in action



▶ See how our pneumatic line thrower works.



▶ Learn more about our beach safety cameras.

Our strategy and performance continued



CASE STUDY



Innovating towards safety: Strengthening response through technology and coordination

In a rescue, every second counts. The ability to see, assess and respond quickly with the right assets often determines the outcome of an emergency. As our beach safety camera network expanded, it became clear that our EOC needed to evolve to keep up.

The EOC is the central point from which incidents are monitored, assessed and coordinated across the country. As more cameras were installed along the coastline, the volume of information increased. This created the need for a larger, more capable facility that could support real-time decision-making and national coordination. We responded by upgrading and expanding the EOC at our VSC in Cape Town. The new facility has nearly doubled in size and significantly strengthened our operational capability.

The redesigned control room provides clearer visual feeds from the camera network, allowing operators to identify risks earlier and monitor changing conditions more effectively. This improves situational awareness and supports faster, more informed decision-making during incidents. The upgrade has also improved how our teams work. While the previous space could only accommodate a small number of operators, the new facility supports multiple operators, a supervisor and support staff working together. This enables better communication and more efficient coordination, particularly during high-pressure situations. A revised shift structure ensures that at least two operators are on duty at all times, with the ability to scale up when needed. A dedicated supervisor supports daily operations and oversees incident coordination.

The EOC is not only a control room, it is also a training environment. The expanded space allows us to train new operators and build a broader support network. Over time, this will include remote volunteer operators who can assist with monitoring and information flow. This increases capacity and strengthens resilience during major incidents.

The impact of the upgraded EOC is already visible. The beach safety camera network has extended coverage to locations including Plettenberg Bay, Nature's Valley and Victoria Bay. These areas include remote or high-risk environments where early detection is critical. In one instance, a remote shore controller monitoring camera feeds identified two teenagers in difficulty in a canoe near the Keurbooms River mouth at sunset. Using the live feed, the controller directed a rescue craft to the teenagers' position and they were brought safely to shore. This is the shift in how we operate, from reacting to incidents to identifying risks early and responding before situations escalate. The technology also supports lifeguards and local teams through integrated warning systems, including alarms, live voice commands and visual signals that help communicate risks to the public.

Investing in systems and infrastructure strengthens our ability to save lives, and brings together technology, trained people and a coordinated response into a single connected network.

As our footprint continues to grow, the EOC will remain central to how we operate. It allows us to extend our reach, improve response times and support safer outcomes along South Africa's coastline.

By building this capability now, we are preparing for the future.



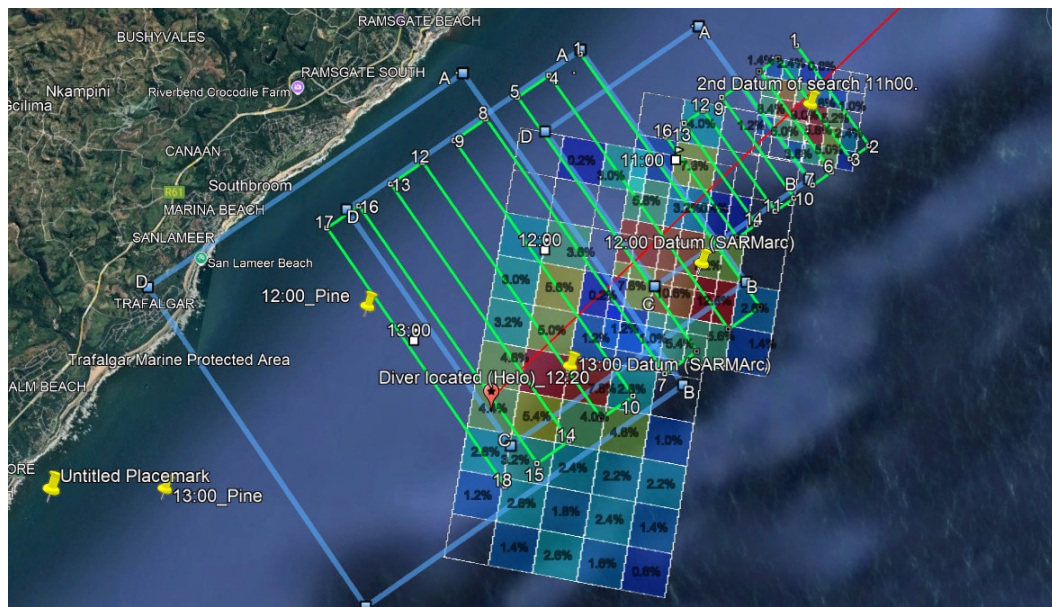
Read more about the **expansion of our EOC** and **beach safety camera programme** on our website.



 Learn more about our **Shark Alarms**.

Our strategy and performance continued

Innovating towards safety continued



Technology-enabled rescue

The SafeTRX location tracking app processed 22 402 tracked trips and 276 alerts in 2025 with cumulative registered users now exceeding 26 000. The technology proved its worth in multiple real-world rescues, including the recovery of two hypothermic surf-ski paddlers in False Bay located precisely through SafeTRX.

Search tools, SARMarc and SearchWell, were distributed to additional stations while automatic identification system drift buoy deployments reached seven Class 3 station groups, enhancing search pattern accuracy.

Information and communications technology

We continually and actively ensure all stations have the best communications available at their locations. This technology is deployed to assist volunteers and support our fundraising centre and control functions.

We are particularly proud of the volunteer portal, which significantly improves and simplifies volunteer interactions with sea rescue systems. It delivers a completely digitised volunteer onboarding process, digital expense claims system, direct access to relevant data and enables single sign on across multiple systems.

Automated systems across NSRI functions provide efficient financial controls, data analytics and the foundation for advanced systems into the future. This includes ongoing improvements to our customer relationship management system supporting our fundraising model.

Data-driven decision-making

The NSRI uses data to ensure our drowning prevention work reaches the people who need it most and that donor support delivers real, measurable impact. By analysing where, how and why drowning incidents happen across South Africa, we can better understand risk and focus our programmes on the communities, water environments and times of year where danger is highest. This evidence-based approach helps us plan smarter prevention activities, strengthen advocacy and use limited resources effectively. We also work closely with other organisations involved in water safety and drowning prevention, sharing information and learning together so that our collective efforts have a greater impact.

The NSRI has invested in a modern data system that brings together fundraising, marketing and operational information in one place. This gives us a clear, up-to-date view of our work and performance, improving accountability and transparency of our reporting for our donors and partners. The new system supports organisation-wide reporting, enabling clearer communication about how funds are used and what they achieve. It also allows more personalised donor communication and more efficient fundraising by improving how call centre teams manage leads and outreach.



We also co-hosted a workshop with Stellenbosch University, which resulted in an agreement between the South African Police Service, Forensic Pathology Services, the University of Cape Town, the City of Cape Town, Western Cape Disaster Risk Management and the Department of Agriculture to establish a national drowning data system with evidence-based prevention.

By strengthening how we collect and use information, the NSRI ensures that decisions are based on reliable facts, that donor support is used wisely, and that our work continues to save lives where it matters most.

The fundraising and marketing function's performance marketing has developed into a proven, scalable growth platform that fundamentally changed the NSRI's donor acquisition model through:

Customer Insights Journey

A new analytical framework mapping the full donor lifecycle from first touch to recurring gift, enabling data-driven campaign optimisation.

Lead allocation model

Scientifically allocating leads between monthly giving and Cars4Good to maximise conversion efficiency.

Marketing campaign automation

Progressive implementation throughout the year, starting with call centre list re-engineering and lead allocation process automation.

Our strategy and performance continued

Championing environmental stewardship

Every water safety lesson that teaches a child to respect the ocean also builds an environmental consciousness that lasts a lifetime.



How we create and preserve value

Our presence along South Africa’s coastline and inland waterways positions us as a natural custodian of these environments.

As a strategic priority, we are embedding environmental responsibility into our core rescue and prevention mission by investing in:

- **Marine and coastal ecosystems** where we operate and contribute to wildlife conservation through initiatives such as whale disentanglement and seal, turtle, seabird and dolphin rescue as well as advocacy through relevant stakeholder relationships.
- **Energy and water conservation infrastructure** such as solar power at some of our rescue stations and low-emission rescue crafts, while promoting responsible practices in communities and collaborating with global organisations to prepare the NSRI for climate-related challenges.

Value created and preserved over time

Key metrics tracking our performance	2025	2024	2023
Animals rescued	70	72	97
Electricity supplied by solar photovoltaic (VSC) ¹	57% (83.6 MWh)	40% (58.2 MWh)	18% (24.5 MWh)
JetRIBs introduced (four-stroke technology) ²	5	5	8

¹ Percentage reflects the proportion of VSC electricity supplied by on-site solar photovoltaic generation.
² JetRIBs contribute to a more environmentally sustainable rescue fleet by reducing the environmental impact associated with older two-stroke rescue craft.

Performance highlights	
Solar energy generated 83.6 MWh at Milnerton VSC (2024: 58.2 MWh)	Animal rescues - Trained NSRI teams rescued 70 animals, including whales, birds, seals, turtles, dolphins and sharks.
Fleet engine strategy and emissions reduction - Replacing older two-stroke vessels with cleaner four-stroke JetRIBs to reduce marine pollution and lower fleet emissions. - Installing solar panels and water tanks across stations to reduce energy costs and our environmental footprint while improving operational resilience. - Deploying PRBs as simple, no-energy, no-emission devices that save lives.	
Whale disentanglement training and equipment - Our investment in whale disentanglement training and improved specialist equipment, strengthens our marine wildlife response capability. - We demonstrated multi-station collaboration for marine conservation during a coordinated whale release operation at Yzerfontein, which involved four stations. - Our crew's expertise in cetacean response was highlighted by a humpback whale release in Cape Town Harbour.	
Coast Watcher volunteer network - 131 Coast Watcher volunteers monitor South Africa's coastline for environmental impacts and early warning of marine emergencies. - 1 431 operational personnel serve as informal environmental monitors through daily station operations and coastal presence. - Lifeguarding operations across sites extend environmental observation capacity.	

Challenges impacting our performance
- Our dependency on diesel and petrol is still high for primary operations. - Flood events and climate extremes are increasingly disrupting operations.
Focus areas in 2026
- Embed environmental sustainability internally across operations, infrastructure and procurement and externally through public messaging and brand positioning. - Integrate environmental principles into strategic decision-making and organisational values to strengthen our credibility and public trust. - Align environmental priorities with national and global sustainability imperatives relevant to maritime and coastal operations.

Our strategy and performance continued



CASE STUDY



Environmental stewardship: Caring for our marine environment

Our commitment to saving lives extends beyond people. It includes protecting the marine environment that supports coastal communities and livelihoods.

Healthy oceans and safe communities are closely connected. When marine ecosystems are under threat, so too are the people who depend on them.

This responsibility was brought into focus during a whale disentanglement operation off the West Coast. A juvenile humpback whale was entangled in heavy fishing rope and flotation buoys. The animal was fatigued and struggling to move, and without intervention, its survival was unlikely. A fishing vessel raised the alarm and remained on scene to provide accurate coordinates. This allowed for a coordinated response involving four NSRI stations. Our crew launched with specialised equipment and began a careful and methodical operation.

Disentangling a large marine animal requires patience, precision and discipline. The safety of the crew must be balanced with the need to reduce stress on the animal. Each movement is deliberate and each decision is measured. In this case, the whale had multiple rope wraps around its tail. The team worked alongside the animal, making a series of controlled cuts while managing its movement and maintaining a safe position. In total, eight cuts were required before the rope and buoys were fully removed. Once free, the whale swam away with strength, diving and moving off into the open water. The moment was simple, but significant because a life was saved.

This operation reflects how environmental stewardship is integrated into how we work, supported by early reporting, shared expertise and coordinated action. We depend on and nurture partnerships with fishing communities, scientists, government agencies and conservation networks. Every intervention considers both immediate and long-term outcomes.

We train crews to respond effectively and with care, use equipment designed to minimise harm and recover debris to prevent further impact.

For our donors, this work shows how their support extends beyond rescue operations. It enables training, specialised equipment and the systems needed to respond responsibly when marine life is at risk. It also reinforces a broader principle: protecting the environment is part of protecting people.

By investing in this capability, we are helping to ensure that South Africa's oceans remain safe, productive and sustainable for future generations.

Our conservation efforts extend to protecting marine wildlife while advocating against pollution.

In partnership with the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town and uShaka Marine World in Durban, we help rescue, rehabilitate and release stranded and injured turtles and actively support their conservation.

We also collaborate with the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds in rescuing and repatriating seabirds and removing deceased birds to mitigate the threat of poisoning.

While animal rescue is not our primary mandate, these interventions reflect our broader relationship with marine and freshwater ecosystems and our role as an environmental first responder.

Our partnership with SANParks at Station 46 Storms River exemplifies the mutually beneficial value of rescue capability and conservation stewardship.



Read more about the [humpback whale rescue](#) on our website.



▶ See a [whale disentanglement](#) in action.

Our strategy and performance continued

Championing environmental stewardship continued

Operating in nature

We operate where human activity meets the natural environment: oceans, rivers, dams, estuaries and coastlines. Our 2025 operational profile reflects this: We carried out 1 069 rescue operations in conditions ranging from calm inland dams to four-metre swells and 35-knot winds.

The impact of climate variability on inland communities, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, was evident in 26 flood and swiftwater incidents, which were less intense than previous years, but persistent.

Climate change implications are increasingly material to the NSRI's operational planning. We maintain flood response and swiftwater capability with the expectation of ongoing or increasing frequency of extreme weather events. The South Cape flood response unit, well-stocked and supported by a collaborative stakeholder plan, is a notable model being considered for national adoption. This represents an evolution of the NSRI's role from maritime rescue to broader water-related disaster preparedness.



Greening initiatives

The most significant environmental contribution from our fundraising and marketing team in 2025 was the strategic shift to digital-first communication. The revised magazine distribution strategy moved from physical-first to digital-first delivery, saving R609 000 per year in postage costs and materially reducing paper consumption, printing waste and the carbon footprint associated with physical distribution across South Africa.

Survival Swimming Centres

Water supply to the pools at our Survival Swimming Centres comes from harvested rainwater collected from the roofs of the centres and surrounding school buildings into adjacent tanks. The Vredendal centre receives water from a purified borehole water system, with no municipal water connected at any site.

Inverters

- Reduce reliance on the national grid.
- Allow rescue operations to remain functional during power outages.

Milnerton Volunteer Support Centre

- Supported by solar power and able to export surplus power.
- LED lighting throughout the building.
- Rainwater tanks (22 500-litre capacity) for toilet flushing, vehicle and vessel washing and irrigation.





Morné Lotter from Station 15 Mossel Bay gives a thumbs up during a demanding swiftwater training session.

