

NATIONAL SEA RESCUE INSTITUTE

STANDING ORDERS 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) is a voluntary organization and while every attempt is made to avoid unnecessary regimentation, for an NSRI station to operate effectively and to protect the safety of its crews, boats, vehicles and equipment as well as to create a desirable public image, certain regulations are essential and shall be followed by all members and persons visiting the facilities of the Institute. This includes any visitors or persons being transported in an NSRI boat or vehicle.

2. MISSION

The Mission of the NSRI is

TO SAVE LIVES IN SA WATERS.

3. VISION

The Vision of the NSRI is:

TO SAVE LIVES, CHANGE LIVES AND CREATE FUTURES.

4. SCOPE

Each NSRI Station, led by its Station Commander is responsible for delivering proactive and reactive emergency rescue services in its primary area of operation, at all times, 24 hours a day, 365/6 days a year.

5. STATION COMMANDER

5.1 The Station Commander (StatCom) is in overall command of the station at all times.

5.2 The StatCom is responsible to the Operations Director for the efficient and effective operation of the station at all times.

5.3 The StatCom will ensure that the NSRI's mission: *The Saving of Lives on SA Waters*, always remains the station's primary concern. On request, the StatCom may make the resources of the station available to other organizations for the purposes of maintaining the positive image of the Institute.

5.4 The StatCom will ensure that there is a training, career and succession plan for all crew.

5.5 The StatCom is the liaison between the Harbour Master and the Station.

5.6 The StatCom authorises the purchase and procurement of all spares and equipment, as well as payment for services rendered.

5.7 The StatCom accepts or declines the offer of volunteering from new members.

5.8. The StatCom accepts and attends national and regional Sea Rescue meetings.

5.9. The StatCom chairs the monthly station committee meeting, and the monthly crew meeting.

5.10 The Station Commander is voted in by station members with more than one year's service, in an election every three years. Only volunteers with more than three years' operational service may stand for election. (See StatCom election policy for further guidance).

6. DEPUTY STATION COMMANDER

6.1 In the absence of the StatCom, the Deputy Station Commander (DepStatCom) will assume the responsibilities of the StatCom.

6.2 The DepStatCom is responsible to the StatCom for the responsibilities as delegated.

7. STATION COMMITTEE, MEETINGS & CREW MEETINGS

7.1 The station committee is responsible for assisting the StatCom in the management of the station.

7.2 The station committee will comprise of, but not be limited to, the following persons:

- StatCom
- DepStatCom
- Duty Coxswains
- Training Coordinator
- Base Administrator
- Base Maintenance Officer
- First aid coordinator
- Fundraising / PR / Social Media coordinator
- Junior Academy coordinator

As well as any other co-opted members, as may be required, on a temporary or permanent basis.

7.3 The station committee will meet each month to discuss all operational matters as well as any other matters pertaining to training, equipment, maintenance, special events, etc.

7.4 Matters arising out of the station committee meeting should be communicated to all members of the station for discussion during the station meeting.

7.5 All crew members, members of the station and trainees are expected to attend the monthly meetings. If a crew member, member of the station or trainee cannot be present, apologies must be tendered.

7.6 Should a member of the station or a crew member miss three (3) concurrent meetings without good reason or apology, then such person/s will be placed on shore leave unless they can motivate a valid reason.

7.7 Minutes of committee meetings must be forwarded to the Ops Manager and Director.

8. DUTY CREW

8.1 The Duty Crew will perform standby duties for the specified period of service (weekly, monthly or ongoing), as per station policy.

8.2 The Duty Crew will comprise of, but not be limited to, the following:

- The duty Coxswain.
- Coxswains.
- Crew members, with sufficient capacity to fulfill roles such as navigator, medical and Rescue swimming, etc.
- Shore Crew & Controllers.

8.3 The oncoming crew will satisfy themselves as to the station's readiness to respond to call-outs, by checking thoroughly every aspect of the station's equipment.

8.4 Any crew member/s not able to perform their duty **must find their own** stand-ins from one of the other crew members and communicate this to the Duty Coxswain. The stand-in crew member/s will attend all training that was programmed for the duty crew and any work party that may have been scheduled. This will also apply to the duty Coxswain/s, who will also inform the StatCom of their change of duty.

8.5 The Duty Coxswain may select their crew from those available and may refuse a crew member if it is felt that the crew member is unsuitable for service for any reason, such as conditions or nature of call.

8.6 During the week, outside normal working hours, crew members on duty are expected to stay within a reasonable travel time of the station (as per station policy). The rescue boat shall however be launched as soon as there are enough crew members, **but not without the Duty Coxswain being present**. Should the boat already be on the water the Coxswain and any crew on board will respond without delay.

8.7 During normal working hours, additional crew members from other crews may be used to supplement the duty crew for call-outs.

8.8 Duty crew members can be called out at any time and must ensure that they are in a fit state to perform their duties.

8.9 Trainee crew are not permitted to proceed to sea on any operational mission.

8.10 Family members: Husband/Wife, Parent/Child, Brother/Sister may not proceed to sea on rescue missions aboard the same boat.

8.11 No member of an NSRI station shall proceed to sea unless they are in possession of a valid NSRI medical certificate, and within the allowed age range of the craft.

8.12 Crew members responding to call outs must adhere to all traffic regulations and laws of the land.

8.13 Any qualified crew member who is eligible as per the currency list to participate in an ASR may do so only with the sanction of the StatCom and provided that such participation does not interfere with their individual obligations and commitments in any manner.

8.14 The use of travel sickness medication may lead to drowsiness and impaired concentration. They may not be taken by any persons in charge of vehicles or machinery or performing any potentially hazardous task.

9. STATION DUTY PHONE

- 9.1 The station duty phone shall be answered 24/7 /365/6.
- 9.2 The station duty phone shall be set to divert for when unanswered / out of signal to another person, who knows that they are receiving Sea Rescue related emergency calls.
- 9.3 The phone will be answered “Sea Rescue, Name speaking, how may I help you?”.

10. AUTHORITY TO LAUNCH

- 10.1 The authority to launch the rescue boats or to deploy the Station’s other rescue equipment is vested in the StatCom.
- 10.2 Only in the absence of the StatCom and the DepStatCom, may a Coxswain launch on his own responsibility. The Coxswain will however make every effort to inform the StatCom or DepStatCom as soon as possible of his decision and intentions.
- 10.3 The nearest Port Control and maritime radio station are to be informed every time the boats are put to sea and recovered.
- 10.4 At the conclusion of a rescue operation, the Coxswain must complete the operations report within 24 hours.
- 10.6 No reward, monetary or otherwise may be demanded from a person who has been rescued. A donation to Sea Rescue may be tactfully suggested.

11. COXSWAIN’S AUTHORITY & DISCIPLINE

- 11.1 Coxswain’s are appointed by the Station Commander in consultation with the Station Committee.
- 11.2 The Coxswain will always be in charge of and responsible for, the crew and the boat.
- 11.3 The Coxswain’s authority on board **is absolute**. The Coxswain’s orders shall be obeyed instantly and without question.
- 11.4 Failure to obey the command of the rescue boat’s Coxswain will result in disciplinary action. Any crew member found guilty of the offence may be asked to leave the station.

11.5 All queries regarding an order may be referred to the appropriate Coxswain at a time **other than** during a service call.

11.6 All disciplinary matters are to be referred to the StatCom by Coxswains without delay. The StatCom may call for a disciplinary hearing by the Station Committee.

11.7. Should a member of the station be brought up on a disciplinary charge, they will appear before the Station Committee, chaired by the StatCom. The committee shall decide on the course of action required to restore the good name of the Institute.

12. NO OBLIGATION TO GO TO SEA

12.1. No crew member can be ordered to go to sea against their wishes. Should the crew member agree to go to sea, such crew member shall obey the Coxswain's orders without question.

12.2. A crew member that believes that they are not competent to carry out a task allocated must say so immediately. Reliance on a crew member to do their task is of utmost importance for the safe and successful rescue operation. It is of fundamental importance to a successful rescue operation that every crew member can depend absolutely on every other crew member to do his or her job properly.

12.3. No Coxswain can be ordered to go to sea, should they believe that the conditions are not safe to do so. The StatCom can, under such circumstances, call for another Coxswain and crew to **volunteer** to put to sea in order to carry out a rescue mission. The final decision on whether the boat puts to sea rests with the StatCom.

13. INDEMNITY FORMS

13.1 The Coxswain will ensure that all persons carried on the rescue boat have filled in an indemnity form.

13.2 No visitor to the station shall be allowed on board any rescue boat unless he or she has completed an Indemnity form fully and the StatCom's permission has been requested and his approval given.

14. NON OPERATIONAL CALLS

The use of the rescue boat and any other station equipment for demonstrations, exercises, special events or non-operational calls, must be approved by the StatCom.

15. NON CREW MEMBERS ON OPERATIONS

Only members of the Institute who are qualified and competent may be used on a rescue operation. In the event that a member of the public who has special skills or competence is needed to assist during a Service Call, the StatCom is able to authorize this.

16. CARRYING OF PASSENGERS

Non NSRI persons may be taken to sea for short demonstration voyages, but only with the prior approval of the StatCom. Refer to the Public Open Day Policy for further guidance.

17. OPERATION OF RESCUE BOATS & EQUIPMENT

17.1 No person may operate an asset of the NSRI unless qualified and authorized to do so by the StatCom.

17.2 No crew member may operate any equipment unless instructed to do so by a Coxswain.

17.3 Reckless or negligent handling of any equipment will be viewed in a serious light, with disciplinary action taken.

17.4 Maneuvering of rescue boats through surf conditions must be carried out with extreme caution and regard for bathers and other users of the sea.

17.5 All crew are to wear life jackets and helmets at all times unless permission is given by the Coxswain to remove either or both.

17.6 Station equipment may not be removed without the prior approval of the StatCom. If approved – this must be logged in the station log book.

17.7 Only the StatCom may authorize the purchase or repair of equipment. Normal procedures determined by procurement will be followed by way of obtaining an order number. See Supply Chain Policy for further clarity.

17.8 Any defective or missing equipment must be reported to the Duty Coxswain for appropriate action.

17.9 On returning from call-outs or training exercises, all equipment will be properly cleaned and re-packed in its correct place so as to ensure that the

Rescue vessel and vehicle is ready for immediate response. Wetsuits must be thoroughly washed in fresh water and hung up to ventilate.

17.10 The oncoming duty crew will at each hand-over/take-over and after each operation/ training, complete the equipment checklist before leaving the station.

17.11 All damage to station equipment shall be reported. The StatCom shall arrange to have the damage investigated to determine the cause. In the event that negligence was the cause of the damage - the StatCom must arrange for a disciplinary hearing to be convened.

17.12 No person shall attend to the repair or maintenance of craft, base or equipment while wearing a wetsuit / foul weather gear, unless at sea in an emergency.

17.13 It is a requirement that only licensed operators may operate marine radio equipment. Unlicensed operators may communicate and use the equipment under the supervision of a licensed operator. During an operation only official shore and station controllers may use the station's radio equipment.

18. TRAINING

18.1 Trained and competent crew members are essential in the operation of a rescue base and all crew members are expected to submit themselves to the training courses as required.

18.2 Regular attendance at training sessions **is a requirement** for all crew and trainees. Station policy will determine a minimum attendance requirement, below which, members will be placed on shore leave

18.3 Duty crew training will take place during the week or weekend at the discretion of the Duty Coxswain who will inform the duty crew and the StatCom of his or her intentions.

18.4 A trainee crew member will be required to undergo a minimum training period of six (6) months. During this period, the trainee will be required to complete the minimum hours and training tasks as per the Task Book, as well as per the Sea Hours and Service requirements Policy.

18.5 Any crew member **not demonstrating** the required skills to perform his or her duty will be requested to do refresher training and may be suspended from operational duties until such training is completed.

18.6 Every crew member shall be issued with a logbook and a task book to record their sea-time and practical training progress.

19. WORK PARTIES

The maintenance and cleaning of the rescue station's equipment and the station building itself is a main function of each station. All crew members are expected to participate in regular work parties for this purpose.

20. DRESS

20.1 Official crew uniform consists of:

- Navy blue jump suit (NSRI branding), or
- Royal blue crew shirt, trainee T-shirt, Crew T-shirt or golf shirt &
- Navy blue jeans (stone washed not acceptable), NSRI shorts or board shorts &
- Boat shoes or other shoes with non-slip soles &
- Station cap, NSRI hat or beanie, &
- NSRI DryMac, Jersey or Black Coxswain Jacket.
- An NSRI rash vest should be worn, such that bare chests and upper arms are not exposed, when partaking in water activities.
- NSRI provides red buffs, for wind and sun exposure.

Please consult with the procurement officer for a full list of current clothing options.

20.2 Other kit provided by the NSRI such as lifejackets, foul weather gear and wet suits must be maintained in good order and may not be removed from the station without authorization of the StatCom unless privately owned.

20.3 Uniform shall only be worn off the station when on official NSRI business.

20.4 The StatCom will determine the appropriate dress for all station members when attending special events.

20.5 In public, crew members are expected to project a professional appearance. An untidy or dirty uniform fails to achieve this.

21. TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

21.1 Crew members responding to “call-outs” must adhere to all traffic regulations and laws.

21.2 The misuse of ‘Sea Rescue’ identification board is a cause for immediate suspension.

21.3 Only correctly licensed drivers may drive an NSRI rescue vehicle, and vehicle with a trailer.

21.4 All traffic fines are for the drivers account, irrespective of the cause.

22. BEHAVIOUR

22.1 No alcohol will be permitted onboard a rescue boat, at any time.

22.2 There will be no consumption of alcohol before or during an operation/exercise.

22.3 Visiting of taverns and pubs whilst in NSRI dress code is strictly forbidden. Discretion must be used when attending an official function.

22.4 The absolute requirement for remaining within the legal alcohol limit for drivers must never be exceeded.

22.5 Crew members, when dealing with the public, must remain courteous at all times and maintain a positive image of Sea Rescue. Bad behavior, arguments, foul language, drinking or rowdiness in public could tarnish the image of Sea Rescue as a responsible and professional body.

23. SMOKING

23.1 Smoking is not permitted on board any rescue boat.

23.2 Smoking is not permitted anywhere near a rescue boat that is being refueled or while decanting fuel or in the vicinity of any fuel storage area.

23.3 Smoking is not permitted in any place where it is prohibited by law or where it may offend someone else.

23.4 Smoking may only take place in demarcated areas on the station.

24. REFUELLING

24.1 All rescue boats and mobiles must be refueled immediately on returning from a call-out or an exercise to be ready for the next call.

24.2 While refueling is in progress the coxswain will ensure that adequate fire safety precautions are in place.

24.3 Refueling will not be permitted in an inadequately ventilated area where there a build- up of flammable vapours can occur.

24.4 To avoid a build-up of static electricity, containers being refueled must be earthed / grounded.

25. WINCHING

25.1 No crewperson is to operate any of the station's winching equipment without direct authority from the coxswain and then only after having been adequately trained to do so.

25.2 No winch shall be used for any purpose unless it is currently certified under the Act.

26. BASE KEYS & ACCESS

26.1 Any crew member issued with base keys is responsible for the safety of keys and is to ensure the base is closed, properly locked and the alarm set when leaving.

26.2 No base keys may be duplicated or given to a third party without the consent of the StatCom.

26.3 If a crewman in possession of base keys leaves the NSRI, the base keys are to be returned to the StatCom.

27. CONTROL ROOM

27.1 No crew member, whether on or off duty, may enter the Control Room while a rescue mission is in progress unless specifically requested by the Station Commander, Duty Coxswain or Control Room Operator.

27.2 All Rescue boats will report their position to the control room every 30 minutes without fail, during a rescue operation or training exercise, or more frequently if required by the Duty Coxswain or Controller.

27.3 The Duty Coxswain must ensure that they have signed the Operation or Exercise logs prior to securing the station. The Radio Operator must

ensure that they have signed the radio logs before securing the Control Room.

27.4 The control room is to be staffed whenever a rescue vessel is at sea.

27.5 Telephones are for operational use. Those wishing to use the phone for a private call should request permission from the duty coxswain.

28. STATION CANTEEN / KITCHEN

28.1 All crew members are responsible for ensuring that the rescue base is clean and tidy at all times and especially before leaving the base.

28.2 The duty coxswain shall appoint duty crew to carry out various tasks which may need attention during the week of duty to ensure the smooth running of the rescue base.

29. FUNDS & FUNDRAISING

29.1 The station fundraising committee should set goals and implement plans to reach the yearly fundraising targets. Stations should aim to secure sufficient income to meet their operational needs (fuel, maintenance expenses, etc.)

29.2 Crewmembers are expected to partake in station fund raising activities from time to time.

29.3 No station bank accounts are permitted to exist - All funds raised are to be deposited only into the Sea Rescue Fundraising Account. Funds will be allocated according to the donor's wishes.

29.4 The only money to be held on station is petty cash, prearranged with head office.

30. SOCIAL MEDIA

The NSRI has an excellent brand reputation built up over years of gaining public trust. One wrong post can ruin it. To ensure a consistent voice we have an official media team, which focuses specifically on media and public awareness, which means that rescue crews can focus on the rescue at hand.

Crew may not post images or info of any rescue operation onto any social media site, without permission from the StatCom. There are privacy implications where casualties are concerned and sensitive, seriously injured or deceased faces are not to be shown. Head office monitors all social media sites and disciplinary action will be taken against those contravening this rule.

31. MEDIA LIAISON

Crew members may not give interviews to the media or make a statement to anyone on NSRI matters.

NSRI has an official country-wide media spokesperson. Station Commanders are to ensure that they and whoever they delegate media related functions to are familiar with this media process.

Ongoing communication with the media spokesman during and after an operation is strongly recommended so that operations may be publicized sensitively, accurately and timeously in the media.

32. FITNESS & CREW WELLNESS

It is the duty of all Sea going crew to keep themselves fit, and familiar with all sea conditions and hazards in their area of operation. Refer to the Crew Wellness Policy for more information.

33. TRACKING SYSTEMS

Stations must ensure that vessels with tracking systems fitted are tracked for each and every launch on the control room PC. This ensures familiarity with these systems and ensures they are operating optimally at all times.

34. ELEARNING

All station crewmembers must be enrolled on the eLearning system and are encouraged to use this facility to reduce burdens on stations for providing theoretical training, allowing more time for practical and experiential training.

35. COXSWAINS

- Coxswains are responsible for running practical and effective training for their crews.

- Coxswains are responsible for the safety of the crew, boat and equipment during training and operational calls.

36. NAVIGATORS

- Navigators are responsible to the Coxswain of the vessel, or control room operator in the control room.
- Navigators are responsible for knowing the position of the rescue vessels at all times, via plotted chart positions and tracking systems.
- Navigators are responsible for planning and monitoring the safe course of the vessel at all times, and making such information known to the Coxswain.

37. RADIO OPERATOR

- Radio operators are responsible for the clear communications between vessels, vehicle and base.
- Radio operators must keep radio on dual watch / or scan at all times, to constantly monitor channel 16.
- Radio operators must know how to transmit distress messages at any time, including how to activate an EPIRB (if fitted to the craft).

38. RESCUE SWIMMERS

- Crew entering the water for the purposes of rescue work must be appropriately experienced, capable, trained, qualified and fit for the task. Station requirements to meet the designation of rescue swimmer must be met, and the crewperson designated as such.

39. CONTROL ROOM OPERATORS

Control Room operators are responsible for the orderly set up and efficient manning of the control room at all times during an operation, or whenever the vessel is at sea. They act in a vital support function to the vessels, vehicles and crews, ensuring the vital communication link between supporting organisations is maintained.

40. MOBILE CONTROLLER

Only trained / qualified and appropriately licensed crew may drive the rescue mobile.

41. CREW

Rescue Crew are responsible for keeping themselves fit & operationally ready for call outs.

Crew are responsible for wearing the correct PPE at all times for required purposes.

Crew must know how to activate AIS MOB device, as well as be up to date in in-water survival skills.

Crew are to ensure their own medical is in date and have completed the required fitness currency test for their vessel within the past 6 months in order to maintain insurance coverage.

42. GRIEVANCE

The NSRI as an organisation serving the public, essentially belongs to the volunteers, as well as the donors who support it. The NSRI has an open-door policy, which means that any member of public, or volunteer, irrespective of length of service has a right to amicably raise any concern they see fit, without fear of reprisal.

Any concern will be addressed by the relevant party in writing, should a verbal answer not be sufficient. Should action be warranted, the NSRI Operations Director will ensure appropriate investigation as well as corrective action is undertaken.

The decision regarding membership of an NSRI station is vested in the station management committee, and a crewperson may be asked to leave the institute (for a time period, or permanently) should the station management unanimously feel that a person is creating a negative situation on station, or should the volunteer relationship deteriorate to an extent that it is not repairable.

While this situation must be avoided and prevented at all costs, NSRI bases as social structures, and the success of the institute depends on tight knit bonds between members.

43. FINAL

The station standing orders are intended to safeguard the crew, the safety of the rescue boat, assets and equipment and to promote the NSRI as a responsible and professional organisation. They shall be adhered to by all members and visitors of the Station.

...Ends/