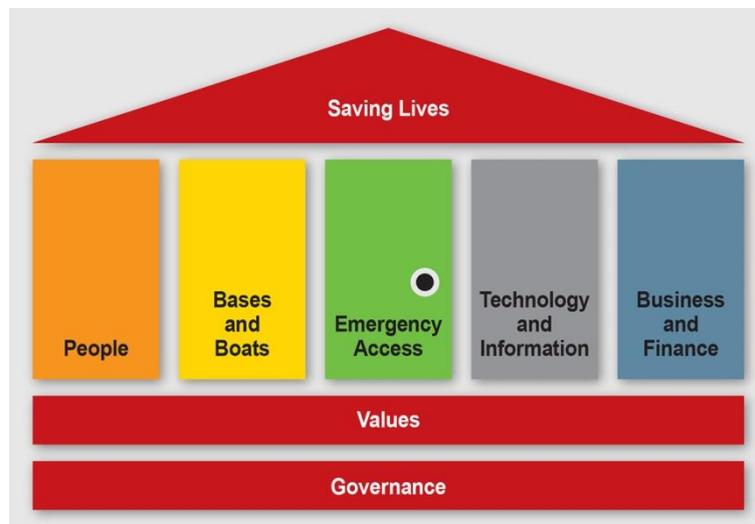


NSRI JUNIOR ACADEMY

One of Sea Rescue's strategic pillars is People.

- We currently have WaterWise, which caters for youth up to about 12 years of age.
- We have a junior academy from 12 to 16
- We have Volunteers from 16 -74.
- We have Life Boat circle from retirement onwards.

We also have all our donors, suppliers, coastwatchers and the people we rescue and who's lives we impact - which make up a vast community of over 80 000 people that Sea Rescue impacts on each year.



This document aims to address the suggested means of setting up and maintaining a junior academy on your station.

Strategic objective number 1 (as presented at the StatCom conference in 2014) is capacitating volunteers, now and for the future. By getting youth involved early – the chances of incorporating them into the Sea Rescue community and philosophy at an older age is much higher. This ensures long-term sustainability of volunteers, donors and stakeholders, and has the much bigger impact of truly helping to transform South Africa – the right way.

Purpose:

- To create an opportunity for teenagers to be a part of the Sea Rescue Family.
- To broaden relationships and partner with external youth organisations **with existing structures and resources**. This will ease the burden of having to begin and maintain a structure independently.
- Examples of such organisations are Scouts, Cadets, Junior lifesaving (nippers), youth / development sailing, Development surfing, paddling / swimming / clubs, etc. Rotaract youth, Young Lions, etc.
- Both the participating organisation and Sea Rescue stand to mutually benefit from this concept. The wheel of a youth organisation has been developed and tested – and we do not want to specifically create another youth organisation or “compete” with existing ones, but rather work with and be a resource to existing organisations.

Benefits:

- Allows families (sea going / operational parents and their children) to serve together as volunteers, in aspects other than the typical “Sea Rescue” functions.
- To diversify our recruitment base, preparing youngsters for possible future roles as Sea Rescue volunteers, or willing future donors.
- To redress equity disparities, by encouraging a spirit of volunteerism & altruism from a young age from previously disadvantaged groups.
- Giving knowledge, values, attitudes & skills to South African youth, for their own future personal development.
- Broadening the NSRI footprint in the drive to make SA a better place for all.

Target Ages:

- 12 -16.
- Once the age of 16 is reached - the candidate is able to officially join the NSRI station in a training capacity as a “trainee” if they so wish, as per the normal joining criteria.
- They can and are encouraged to remain attached to the youth organisation / academy by being involved in the training and mentoring of the new candidates.

Race & Gender: Female & Male, from all population groups.

Requirements for youngsters to join:

- Family / Guardian support and encouragement is essential. A waiver and indemnity will need to be filled in by the parent / guardian.
- Skills such as swimming ability or boating experience is not required – as the development of these skills is what the academy is about.
- A medical disclosure form is sufficient for joining, with any exceptions needing to be referred to a Doctor. Upon joining the base in a trainee capacity at 16 – a full NSRI medical will have to be done, along with the usual administration requirements.



Costs: No cost for joining for the candidate. Costs will be budgeted to the station, and funds raised for this initiative will go directly toward the station cost centre

Relationship to Station:

- The youth organisation will be affiliated to a specific station. One of the station volunteers should be tasked with the role of overseeing, building and maintaining the relationship with the youth organisation and the station.
- Any meetings that are held at the base, should be held in a separate time / location to the station, and training calendars and events will be kept separate (except where specifically a combined event). The dates and times can overlap, so that families are able to join, travel and serve together, however this is not envisioned to be a burden in any way upon a rescue station.

Going out on NSRI vessels, to sea & on the station mobile:

- This will be something that is arranged from time to time (once every 6 months or so), and not as a matter of course.
- The intention is to develop mostly land based skills – that will one day contribute to sea-going skills at a later stage. Creating a hunger for volunteering at a later stage – instead of teaching them all there is to know – is the idea.



Hierarchy & Structure:

Depending on the type of relationship with a specific youth organisation the structure could mimic the Rescue station, with a StatCom (adult person in charge); Coxswains (juniors who lead the various “crews”), and crew, and trainees (new youngsters who have joined).

The juniors should be loaded on the MIS, with all details captured correctly – so that records such as Next of Kin details, etc. are available if needed.

Insurance, injury, etc.:

Still being discussed by our underwriters. It is unlikely that cover would be offered – and this would need to be explained to the candidates that it is at their own risk.

Clothing, Uniformity & brand:

There will be a junior academy brand and clothing available- that identifies them as such.

Equipment:

Equipment specific to the junior academy will belong to that academy, and rescue base equipment and assets are not for general use by the academy, unless specifically arranged.

Aspects for youngsters to Learn:

- Swimming skills (from foundation to advanced)
- Snorkelling
- First Aid and CPR
- WaterWise
- Knots and rope work
- Seamanship (and all that it involves)
- Navigation
- Rescue & lifesaving skills
- Leadership / teamwork
- Etc.



The assessment of various above tasks will be in the form of a task book, with various “badges” to signify what has been achieved – and to inspire a culture of ambition in terms of learning, gaining qualifications and to develop oneself.

Process:

- Stations should identify a willingness to want to participate in this strategy concept.
- Stations should identify a willing and able volunteer(s) who has the skill, attitude and availability to contact, welcome and encourage external youth organisations to partner with us.
- Current serving volunteers with children of the correct age, and who are willing – are also viable options for recruits to the junior academy.
- An open day should be arranged to explain the concept, give the benefits, and establish the ground rules of the relationship. The medical disclosure and indemnity will be collected here, as well as having parents / guardians being able to ask questions and get clarity.
- A regular / scheduled meeting time and location (base) – that suits the candidates should be proposed and accepted.
- Once it is determined the numbers – they are registered on MIS, and clothing arranged as a uniform (if this is acceptable to the external youth organisation).
- A Task / syllabus / award system is to be developed – which the candidates work towards, in a structured, developmental way – enabling them to earn badges and develop new skills.

This is the formative idea of the concept. Obviously as we move into it – best practise as well as do’s and don’ts will come forward.

To summarise: regarding the NSRI Junior Academy, with respect to stations that have a regular attendance of the same junior crew on a continuous basis.

The main concern that we want to avoid at all costs, due to the potential reputational risk to NSRI is for any juniors to suffer injury or death or exposure to traumatic experiences. Protecting kids from social predators is also a concern that needs to be managed.

In order to do the above, it is vitally important that we comply to some minimum requirements:

- The minimum age of youngsters to be recruited is 12 years of age.
- They are not “volunteer rescue crew” in any way, manner or form until they reach the age of 16, when they complete a medical and undergo the full application process to join.
- They are not permitted to go beyond 1 NM out to sea on any boat trip, and only on days that are calm and safe.
- They do not need to do a medical, but any conditions that may affect their own or others safety must be disclosed by the legal guardians.
- The legal guardians must accompany the junior academy member to the first session in order to have an opportunity to ask questions, and to be informed of the risks, responsibilities and that NSRI does not indemnify or cover them for injury or death whatsoever. The risk is taken entirely voluntarily, and under the acceptance of their legal guardians.
- They are permitted to partake the eLearning, and mostly land and water based practical tasks, but it is not envisaged that that they routinely undertake boat trips on Sea Rescue vessels.

Feedback of the Pros & Cons & any ideas & suggestions are more than welcome.