

TITLE: INCIDENT REPORTING, RECORDING AND INVESTIGATION	
Guideline Number: LS1471	Issue Date: 3 / October / 2007
Issue Status: 1.0	

PURPOSE:

To provide minimum requirements for the reporting, recording and investigating of incidents attended to by lifesavers and lifeguards.

The data from the incident logs and forms is vital in incident analysis and development of new intervention strategies and public awareness campaigns.

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA), for example, collects data nationally for drowning, member injuries, near-drowning and major rescues. This data provides a national census of risk groups and types of incidents occurring on our beaches.

SCOPE:

This Guideline applies to the following:

- All government authorities and agencies and those organisations responsible for the management and operation of coastal environments; and
- Those organisations experienced in public safety and responsible for the provision of public safety services.

For example:

- Coastal/marine park authorities and managers
- Lifesaving service providers
- Lifeguards and lifeguard supervisors

This Guideline applies to coastal environments, including ocean coastline and saltwater waterways that open to the oceans surrounding Australia.

GUIDELINE DESCRIPTION:

1.0 Reporting and recording: incident report log (see LS1471 Appendix 1, SLSA Incident Report Log)

1.1 Logs and forms

- a. An incident report log (IRL) should be used for reporting all items attended to by a lifeguard, including:
 - All major first aids
 - Minor first aids (optional)
 - All major rescues
 - All search and retrievals
 - All member injuries (e.g. around club, at carnivals, on patrol)
 - All drownings
 - All near-drownings
 - All complaints (e.g. from the public about a patrol)
 - All resuscitations
- b. All logs and forms should be completed as soon as practical following the incident and on the same day.

- c. All completed logs and forms are to be forwarded to the club captain or lifeguard supervisor, or as appropriate within your organisation

1.2 Privacy

- a. In completing the logs and/or forms, lifeguards need to be mindful of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwlth) and the organisation's privacy policy.
- b. All logs and forms should be stored in a secure location.

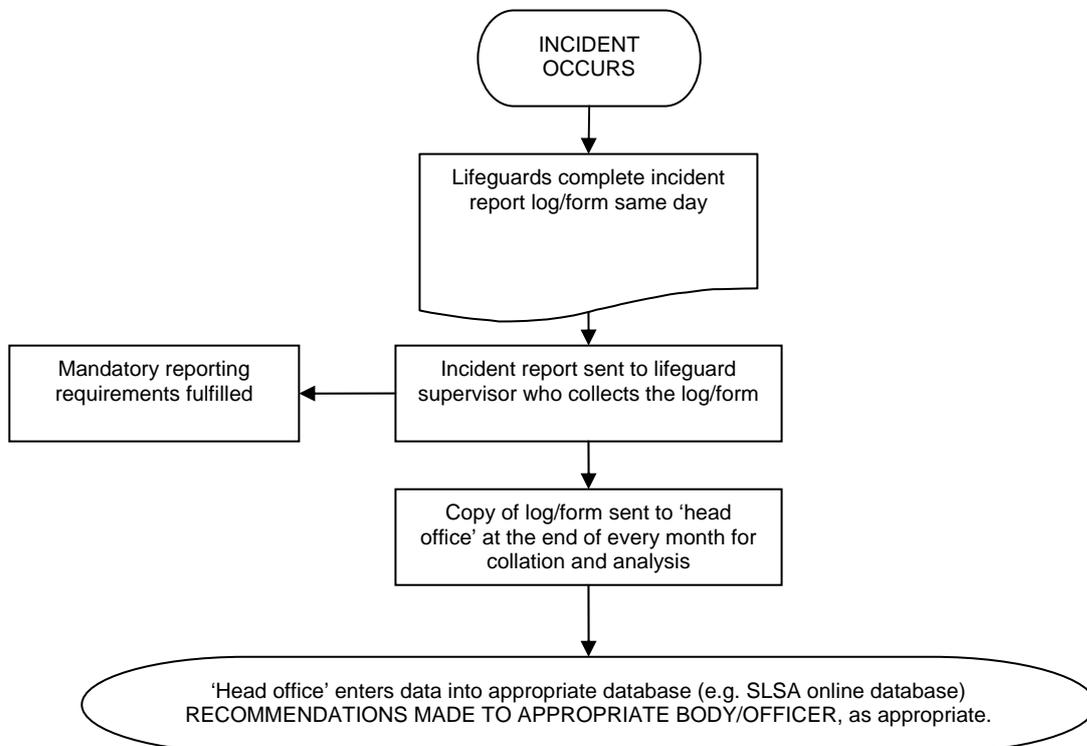
1.3 Regulatory requirements – incident notification (mandatory reporting)

In completing the logs and forms, lifeguards need to also comply with state and territory legislation and regulations, such as mandatory reporting under occupational health and safety (see Guideline LS1475).

1.4 Administration procedures

When a lifesaving incident has occurred that is not deemed to be major incident, the following procedure is to take place (Fig. LS1471.1).

Figure LS1471.1. Incident reporting flow chart



1.5 Monitoring procedures

- a. All incidents should be recorded in the relevant incident and patrol logs.
- b. Each month, as a minimum, all logbooks should be cross-referenced with each other to ensure that all incidents have been reported.

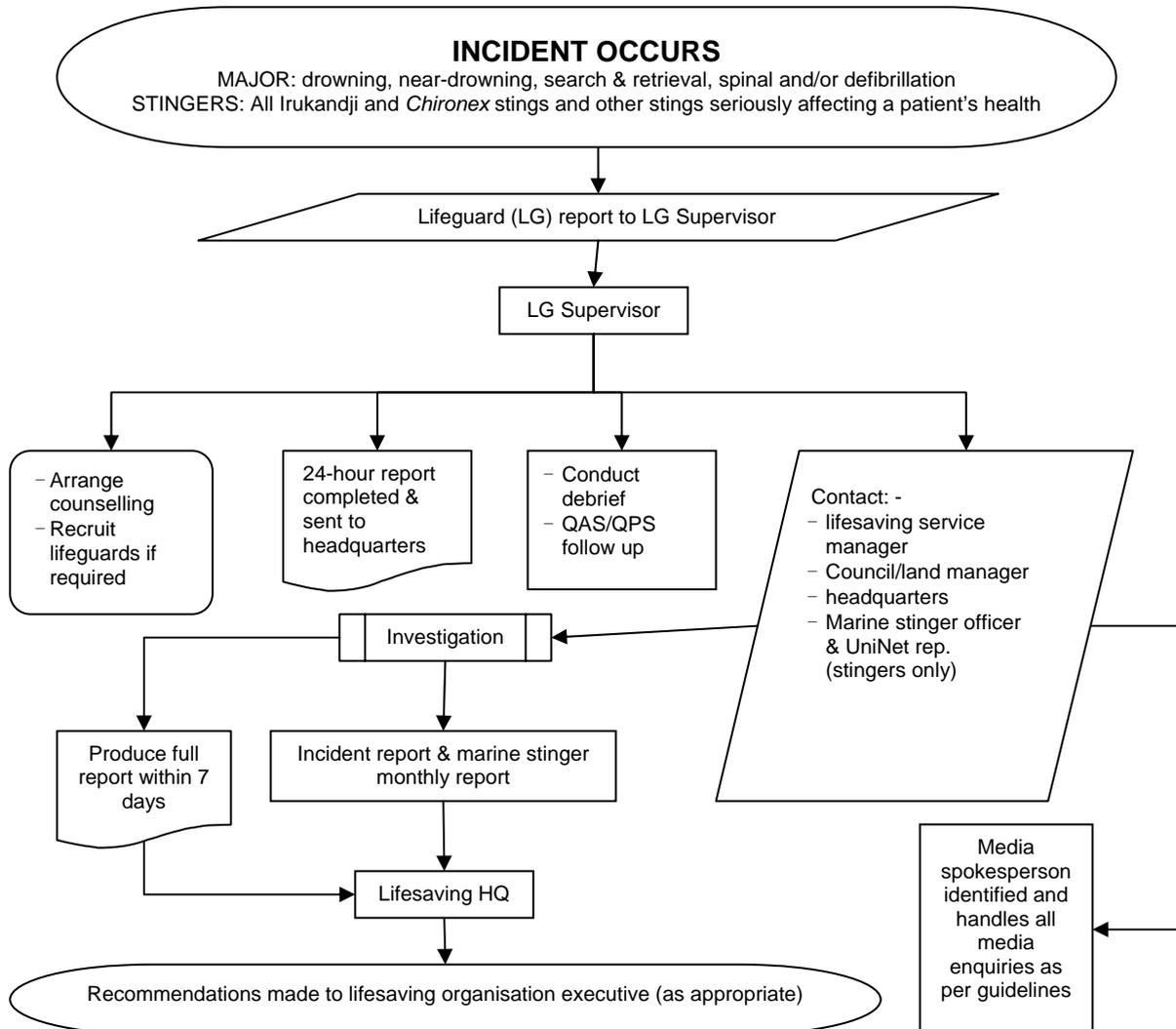
1.6 Evaluation and implementation procedures

- a. All major incidents should be monitored biannually by the lifeguard supervisor, with a report completed.
- b. This report should be forwarded to the lifesaving service provider for assessment, comment and recommendations.
- c. Where recommendations are made, every attempt should be made to implement an action plan to improve the quality of the lifesaving service and public safety provided.

2.0 Major incident reporting procedure

When a major incident and/or (major) marine sting has occurred, the following procedure is to take place (Fig. LS1471.2).

Figure LS1471.2. Incident reporting flow chart



3.0 Incident investigation

All incidents requiring investigation should contain the following content:

- 3.1. INVESTIGATION DETAILS (investigating officer/committee and terms of reference)
- 3.2. INCIDENT DETAIL
 - I. Date, time, place
 - II. Purpose of the activity/launch/passage
 - Training
 - Patrol
 - Rescue
 - Demonstration/public relations
 - Commercial

- Other – please state
- III. Communication, coordination, command and control
 - Before/during/after
- IV. Pre-incident
 - Briefing
 - Communications
 - Liaison
 - Practice/rehearsal
 - Preparation
- V. Incident
 - Nature
 - Outcome
 - Possible cause/contributing factors
- VI. Post-incident (debriefing)
- VII. Agencies involved/informed
 - Other lifesaving services
 - VMR
 - Police/water police
 - Ambulance services
 - Commercial
 - Other – please state

3.3. ENVIRONMENTAL

- I. Weather
 - Wind
 - Adverse weather conditions
 - Sun/available light
- II. Sea state
 - Surf/swell
 - Wave type
 - Craft's position in relation to surf/swell
 - Tides
- III. Geographic features
 - Headland
 - River mouth
 - Sand banks/rocks/reefs

3.4. EQUIPMENT

- 4.1 Craft and motor details
 - Type
 - Registration/serial number
 - Age
- 4.2 Equipment status
 - Maintenance logs
 - Craft logbooks
 - User checklists
 - Last service
- 4.3 Safety equipment
 - Available
 - In use
- 4.4 Equipment performance
 - Failure
 - Adequacy
 - Accessibility

3.5. CREW MEMBER DETAILS

4.5 Person(s) involved

- Key personnel
- Other persons involved

4.6 Training

- Qualifications/awards
- Licence
- Proficiency
- Currency
- Experience

4.7 Health

- Indication of drugs/alcohol
- Fatigue
- Prescription drugs/medication
- Health/medical conditions

3.6. LEGISLATION AND POLICY

I. Any breach of legislation or policy

- Legislation
- Rules and regulations
- Policy
- Procedure

3.7. REPORTS

7.1 Witness statements

7.2 Reports

- Damage report
- Incident report log (LS1471 Appendix 1)
- Maritime incident report form
- Others

7.3 Picture/sketches/diagrams

3.8. INVESTIGATORS' OBSERVATIONS

4.8 Observations and comments

- Legal implications
- Risk management/safety

4.9 Recommendations

DEFINITIONS:

Emergency means 'a sudden, unforeseen or unexpected occurrence or combination of occurrences, or abnormal situation, present or imminent, which requires prompt action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety, or wellbeing of people or to limit damage to records or property'.

Emergency action plan means 'a plan that outlines the procedures to be used in the event of an emergency'.

First aid means 'the provision of emergency and initial treatment given in a case of injury or sudden illness before regular medical treatment can be obtained'.

Lifeguard means 'an appropriately trained and qualified individual who volunteers or is employed at bathing beaches, pools, etc. to prevent drowning, provide injury prevention and response services, and to save people from drowning'.

Lifesaving service means ‘an organised and structured service comprised of lifeguards and appropriate rescue and first aid equipment supported by a coordinated backup team’.

Major injury means ‘an injury that is potentially life-threatening and which requires emergency medical attendance and transfer to advanced medical facility’.

Minor injury means ‘an injury or suspected injury that is non-life-threatening and which may not require emergency medical attendance’.

Post-traumatic stress, also referred to as critical incident stress, means ‘physical and/or emotional disorder caused by excessive amounts of stress’.

QAS means ‘Queensland Ambulance Service’.

QPS means ‘Queensland Patrol Service’.

VMR means ‘Volunteer Marine Rescue’.

REFERENCES:

Australian Coastal Public Safety Guidelines

- DG1913: Incident investigation and reporting
- LS1475: Notification of OHS incidents and injuries

Guidelines for safe recreational water environments. Volume 1 – Coastal and fresh waters. World Health Organization, Geneva, 2003.

Incident Report Log, Surf Life Saving Australia.

Lifeguard Service Operating Procedures Version 1, Surf Life Saving Queensland, February 2005.

Surf Life Saving Australia, 2003. Surf lifesaving training manual, 32nd edition. Elsevier Australia Pty Ltd.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1. SLSA Incident Report Log (Separate FILE: LS1471 APP 1, SLSA INCIDENT REPORT LOG 27-07-05.pdf)