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Title:	Volunteer Helicopter Crew Positions – South East Queensland Region (Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast)
Document ID:	061.04.2021
Department:	Commercial – Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service
Audience:	All Members, All Clubs, All Branches, All SLSQ Officers
Summary:	Call for expressions of interest as volunteer helicopter rescue crew
Date:	23 rd April 2021

The Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service is seeking expressions of interest from highly self-motivated, suitably qualified, and proficient surf life savers to undertake training and operational duties in the demanding and challenging role as Volunteer Rescue Officers (RCOs).

The Service has an exceptionally proud history since 1976 of operating effective and safe helicopter patrols across South East Queensland in support of Surf Life Saving Queensland and now has a limited number of vacancies for new helicopter crew.

Only those applications that meet all minimum requirements listed below will be invited to any selection session. It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure that their SLS awards are current, and they are a financial and proficient member of an affiliated Surf Life Savings Club prior to applying.

Applications will be submitted to the Surf Life Saving Queensland's Operations Support Panel for endorsement prior to the training process commencing. Applicants considered for progression in the selection process, will be required to attend an interview with a panel of senior helicopter flight crew members to ensure the minimum requirements and suitability for the role and training are met.

Applicants should be aware that only limited vacancies are available. **ALL** minimum crew applicant criteria and qualifications must be met prior to a Helicopter Crew application being submitted. It should be noted that the selection process is highly competitive and meeting minimum criteria in no way guarantees acceptance.

As a helicopter crew member, **you will be expected to complete at least 2 rostered volunteer helicopter patrols per month**, attend training sessions, crew meetings and participate in other activities as organized by the Service. Due to the significant time and cost involved in training crew, a minimum commitment from the successful candidates of three (3) years is expected, notwithstanding exceptional circumstances.

In addition to any helicopter duties successful candidates will be expected to continue to have active involvement with their club and complete all club, beach patrol commitments. It is also a SLSQ requirement that all helicopter crew remain financial and proficient member of their Surf Life Saving Club.

As the Service operates continuous patrols including the period outside of the normal SLSQ Patrol Season (September to May), successful applicants must be willing to participate in a regular patrol roster which involves full day patrols on weekends and public holidays throughout the year. Successful applicants may also be required to participate in a rotational after hours' callout roster.

Surf Life Saving Queensland

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Selection Process

The process of becoming a helicopter crew person involves multiple stages (see below), and typically occurs over a 6 to 12-month period. The intent is to commence the selection process and training in order that the successful candidates commence rostered patrols at the start of the 2021\22 season. Successful candidates will be required to complete the initial training phase within three months of commencement. Training is scheduled to commence in June 2021 or sooner if possible.

The stages are:

1. Applications addressing minimum criteria, received and initial vetting undertaken.
 2. Fitness/Operational Test Requirements assessed.
 - a. Fitness assessment as detailed below.
 - b. First Aid assessment.
 - c. Resuscitation assessment.
 3. Interview.
 4. Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET).
 5. Trainee crew selected.
 6. Emergency Breathing System (EBS) Training.
 7. Rescue crew training.
 8. Basic ground and flight assessment.
 9. Successful completion of a 12-month probation period.
- (Note: Applications will be vetted at all stages)

Minimum Crew Applicant Criteria

Applicants must fulfil the following minimum requirements prior to lodging an application with the Service:

- Be a minimum of 21 years of age.
- Have an acceptable body weight, as determined by the selection panel.
- Be a current financial and proficient member of a Surf Life Saving Queensland affiliated Surf Life Saving Club.
- Have completed a minimum of three (3) years SLS beach patrol service.
- Be endorsed by their SLS Club for duties on the Helicopter Service.
- Have no limiting disabilities.
- Have an excellent record of SLS beach patrol attendance.
- Have excellent teamwork skills.
- Hold a current open vehicle driver's license.
- Holds a current Working with Children Clearance (previously known as a Blue Card).
- Hold current up to date and be proficient in the minimum awards as outlined below.
- Attend and pass the helicopter crew fitness test, HUET and EBS courses.
- Undertake drug and alcohol testing at commencement of training and on a random basis as required.
- Any other criteria as determined by the selection panel.

Minimum Qualifications

- Certificate II in Public Safety (Aquatic Rescue) (Bronze Medallion).
- Advanced Resuscitation Techniques (HLTAID007 or its successor or equivalent).
- Provide First Aid (HLTAID003 or its successor or equivalent).
- IRB Driver's Certificate or Rescue Watercraft Certificate.
- Other awards additional to those specified above will be considered when selecting candidates.

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Preferred Experience

Current or previous experience with other Surf Life Saving Operations Support units will be viewed favourably.

Helicopter Crew Fitness/Operational Test Requirements

The crew fitness tests are additional to those normally associated with surf lifesaving activities. They have and will continue to be designed to ensure that all helicopter crew can demonstrate the physical endurance and strength required to carry out helicopter crew duties safely and efficiently.

As a minimum, successful trainee crew applicants who meet the above award criteria will be required to complete the Initial crew fitness test within a continuous two (2) hour period.

1. Swim 500 metres in full rescue garb which includes wetsuit, full body rescue harness and fins in 11 minutes.
2. Swim 300 metres in full rescue garb which includes wetsuit, full body rescue harness and fins within 10 minutes. This section includes 3 x 100 metres cycles. Each 100 metres cycle includes 50 metres swim, recover a 70 Kg rescue mannequin from 2 to 4 metre depth and tow 70 kg simulated weight 50 metres.
3. Run 2.4 kilometres in 12 minutes on flat ground.
4. 25 sit-ups.
5. 25 push-ups.
6. Float unassisted, fully clothed, for 12 minutes.
7. 25 second flex arm hang with overhand grip.
8. Retrieve simulated patient from pool depth of five metres.

Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET) and Emergency Breathing System (EBS) Training course

Applicants will be required to successfully pass a theoretical and practical course of instruction in Helicopter Underwater Escape and in Emergency Breathing System (EBS) Training prior to commencing flight crew training. This course will involve practical underwater escape sequences from a training module simulating a helicopter ditching into water, with and without the aid of an emergency breathing system. The course will involve various levels of disorientation whilst underwater requiring escape sequences to be conducted from confined spaces with restricted access. Full training will be provided prior to the practical components of this course which will be conducted in a fully controlled and managed environment.

Interview

An applicant will be required to attend a selection interview before a panel. The applicant will also be evaluated throughout the full duration of the briefing and fitness/operational test requirements as to their suitability.

Other Requirements

All applicants must be conscious of operational factors including that rostered duty is generally from 0800 – 1700 on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays and 0700 – 1800 during the Christmas holiday peak period. Crew will be required to be rostered for training/patrol on a Saturday or Sunday at a minimum twice in every calendar month. Crew will also be rostered on Public Holidays. New crew will be expected to be available for rostered patrols especially during Easter, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

The Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service maintains bases on the Gold Coast at Carrara and on the Sunshine Coast at Caloundra. Training will principally be conducted on the Gold Coast. All operational training for new crew applicants will be conducted on the Gold Coast unless operational requirements dictate otherwise.



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Ongoing Crew Requirements:

To remain an active member of the crew, successful applicants will be required to:

- Remain a financial member of their SLSC Club.
- Complete an annual SLS Club proficiency by 31 December each year.
- Be endorsed annually by the Operations Support Panel.
- Maintain currency in pre-requisite SLSQ awards.
- Maintain currency in internal Helicopter Service awards.
- Successfully complete the Helicopter Service fitness assessment which is conducted twice a year.
- Successfully complete HUET and EBS training every two years.
- Attend regular crew meetings as and when called.
- Undertake drug and alcohol testing on a random basis as requested.
- Attend scheduled Helicopter Crew training sessions which will be in addition to rostered patrols.

Process for applying:

All applicants must complete the SLSQ Operations Support Application Form, attached or in Section 12 of the SLSQ Patrol Operations Manual (Form LOS-001/2). The applicant must have this application form endorsed by their respective Surf Life Saving Club and must attach a SurfGuard\Members Portal member report to the application.

Additionally, all applications must be accompanied by a cover letter detailing your surf lifesaving experience, and what skills you bring to the service. A current C.V. should also be attached.

Applications are to be forwarded to Andrew McNeilly, Chief Crew person WLRHS, at PO Box 3747, South Brisbane Qld 4101 or Email at westpacrescue@lifesaving.com.au by close of business Friday 14th May 2021.

If you require any further information in relation to this matter, please contact the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service on (07) 5512 0200.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. McNeilly', written in a cursive style.

Andrew McNeilly
Chief Crew person – Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service