

Advanced Lifesaving Development Program – Sunshine Coast

From 24–26 January, I was fortunate to be selected to attend the Advanced Lifesaving Development Program on the Sunshine Coast, delivered by Surf Life Saving Queensland.

Twenty-four surf lifesavers from across Queensland were chosen to complete either the Beach Operations Management (BOM) skillset or the Silver Medallion Aquatic Rescue award. Over the course of the program, we were kept on our toes with highly realistic and authentic scenarios spanning land- and water-based rescues, inter-agency cooperation, and teamwork across our patrol groups.

To preserve the authenticity of the program, I'll keep the scenarios themselves under wraps - but they were as real-world as it gets and provided invaluable opportunities to develop skills directly transferable to our home clubs. We were also challenged with advanced search techniques, underwater recovery skills, and (everyone's favourite) rock entries and exits - jumping off places we were always told never to jump from. What a thrill!

While I returned home tired and sore, I also came back with a wealth of knowledge and a renewed appreciation for the critical role we play as part of a broader surf lifesaving and emergency response network. The skills developed weren't just exciting - they're essential in keeping us truly rescue ready, whatever our aquatic environments may present.

I was particularly impressed by the younger participants and their ability to confidently lead and manage complex situations. The trainer-to-learner ratio was outstanding, ensuring everyone received meaningful, hands-on feedback throughout the program.

I would strongly encourage anyone interested to put their name forward when this opportunity comes around again. It's challenging, rewarding, and the standard of training is second to none - a great example of Surf Life Saving giving back what you put into it.

A big thank you to everyone involved, from those in Cairns who nominated me, to the team at HQ who facilitated such a high-quality program.

James Czencz - Cairns SLSC

