

WINTER 2014: TAYLORS MISTAKE SLSC



RESCUE OF THE MONTH

RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING RESCUES

SOUTHERN WINNER

In it for life

Date/time: Monday 10 November 2014 at 6pm

Location: Taylors Mistake

Lifeguards involved: Patrice de Beer, Ian Rea, Tisha Bradley-Jamieson, Mike Smith

Just before 6pm on November 10 at Taylor's Mistake, as Surf Lifeguard Award and IRB training was getting underway, lifeguards were alerted to a situation unfolding on the cliff face to the east of the beach.

A member of the public advised that a young male was trapped and couldn't move safely from his position. His friend, who had also climbed the cliff face, traversed down to sit with him until help arrived.

The ledge that they were sitting on was approximately 10-15 metres down a near-vertical face, with a drop of approximately five metres to the rocks below.

Lifeguard Tisha Bradley-Jamieson obtained information from the informant and requested an IRB team. Patrice de Beer and Ian Rea responded and undertook an assessment of the patient from the water's edge.

It was determined that a specialist cliff rescue team was needed from the Fire Service. Lifeguard Mike Smith arrived and immediately took a radio to position himself above the location of the patient, allowing direct communication from the site.

Following the initial assessment, Tisha remained on communications at the club house, with the IRB team holding in an area under the cliff.

Mike gave reassurance to the two people and kept them advised on progress of the response. He assessed the situation and identified unstable rocks and a large fallen tree immediately above the patients. The ledge that they were sitting on was narrow and consisted of loose material that had fallen from the cliff face above.

The Fire Service arrived and undertook an assessment, armed with the initial site assessment from lifeguards. A joint control position was established with Mike and the SFO on site. This allowed direct communication between the two teams and allowed discussion on the safest method of extraction.

The cliff rescue team created a double tie back to anchor the ropes required for the extraction. Following further assessment of the patients, it was decided that the male would be placed into a harness and lowered down to the water's edge for extraction by the IRB. The young female was happy to be placed into a harness and extracted up the cliff face to the top track.

During the event, the media arrived and set up a camera on the beach to video the event. This caused considerable agitation to the male patient and caused him to move around unrestrained on the cliff face; concerning the rescue team on scene with him.

Mike relayed communication back to Tisha in the patrol room, and to the IRB, to help return the patient to a location away from the media. The Fire Service undertook a textbook recovery of the patients, demonstrating their skills in the procedure.

The patient was lowered down to the IRB and returned to shore, away from the media. Mike then escorted the woman back to the clubhouse where her friend's condition was being assessed.

The rapid response of the lifeguards training on the beach allowed an early identification of the issues and need to call in a specialist team, therefore minimising any risk to the patient. The rescue was a great example of an interagency response.