

## Improving Water Safety

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The Plan to rebuild essential services

## The Plan to rebuild essential services

### \$750,000 boost to water safety

A majority Hodgman Liberal Government will work to improve water safety, with a \$750,000 funding boost.

Our Plan includes:

- A \$400,000 funding boost for Surf Life Saving Clubs across the state;
- \$150,000+ for local government to improve water safety in remote locations outside traditional patrol areas;
- \$200,000 in additional funding for Volunteer Marine Rescue units; and
- Investigating the inclusion of volunteer surf life savers under State Government insurance, as currently exists for other volunteers such as fire, ambulance, SES and hospital workers.

Tasmania has the second highest rate of drowning in the nation. The importance of water safety cannot be overstated, and a majority Liberal Government will work hard to improve water safety, for all Tasmanians.

### \$400,000 funding boost for Surf Life Saving Clubs

There are currently 14 surf life saving clubs across the State, from Boat Harbour to Clifton, and they, under the Surf Life Saving Tasmania (SLST) umbrella, provide free surf lifesaving services on our beaches, as well as water safety education and training, and a variety of lifesaving sports and recreational programs.

**A majority Hodgman Liberal Government will increase annual funding to Surf Life Saving Tasmania by \$100,000 per year, for four years, from \$150,000 per year to \$250,000 per year.**

This funding is vital to help offset the growing cost of providing surf lifesaving services on the State's beaches, for recreational boaters, lifesaving skill development and other community programs. Surf Life Saving Tasmania must also keep pace with the escalating public liability insurance premiums, which in some cases have increased almost tenfold.

By increasing recurrent funding, Surf Life Saving Tasmania can also expand its existing programs, and conduct new programs including –

- programs for Tasmanians with disabilities;
- programs for children in low socio-economic areas to participate and learn vital water safety skills;

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- expanding support for schools, teachers and community groups where the increasing possibility of litigation and risk has impacted on group excursions;
- expand awareness and risk management programs for the tourism industry, for the safety of tourists to our State; and
- enable Surf Life Saving to continue to lead the nation in developing programs that have national and international benefit, such as the recent *BoatWise* phone application that's being introduced into NSW and is being assessed by the Australian National Search and Rescue Council.

### **\$150,000 for local government to improve water safety**

An increasing number of locals and visitors are making the most of the State's fantastic beaches and waterways, that were previously regarded as inaccessible or remote. Many of these places are outside the operation of traditional patrol areas.

**A majority Hodgman Liberal Government will provide \$150,000 over three years to establish a Water Safety Fund to assist local government in implementing initiatives and services to address water safety concerns in their respective municipalities.**

Councils will be able to apply to the fund to implement initiatives such as the provision of safety audits, lifeguards, and the extension of patrols.

### **Supporting Volunteer Marine Rescue services**

With 56,000 recreational boat licences in Tasmania alone, Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) provide critical inland, inshore and offshore search and rescue services.

As more Tasmanians take to the water and the demand increases, VMR units across the State are having to spend more time fundraising to cover their operating costs, rather than their core functions, and recruiting and training new members.

**A majority Hodgman Liberal Government will work with SLST to secure the future operation of VMR units across the State by, as a first step, providing an additional \$200,000 in funding (\$50,000 per year for four years).**

This additional funding will be distributed to VMR units through SLST so that they can continue to deliver a world class volunteer inland, inshore and offshore rescue service.

### **Insurance**

**A majority Hodgman Liberal Government will investigate the merits of adopting the successful model used in South Australia for Surf Life Saving**

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Tasmania and its surf life saving clubs to be covered under the State Government insurance policy, consistent with volunteer fire, ambulance, SES and hospital workers.

This would reduce the cost each member pays to be a volunteer surf lifesaver, and the money that each surf life saving club and Surf Life Saving Tasmania pays in insurance premiums.

### Costings

\$750,000 over four years