Surf Life Saving Australia – Circular

Title:	IRB Crew and Silver Medallion IRB Driver Course Release
Document ID:	76/23-24
Audience:	Current IRB Trainers, Assessors and Facilitators (TAFs), Chief Training Officers (CTOs)
From:	Learning & Development
Date:	18 June 2024
Subject:	New IRB Crew and Silver Medallion IRB Driver Course
Summary:	New IRB Crew and Silver Medallion IRB Driver Course resources have been developed, designed specifically to meet the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil these roles in SLS. The new resources will be released on Monday 1st July 2024. This circular provides an overview of the new IRB course components and national resources provided to assist with the delivery of the courses. The rollout process is also outlined.

Introduction

New IRB Crew (IRBC) and Silver Medallion IRB Driver (SMIRBD) course resources have been developed, designed specifically to meet the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil these roles in SLS. The resources will supersede the current resources as of 1st July 2024, when they will be made available on the SLS Members Area, and the eLearning and Manual will be made live. At the same time, the current award resources will be removed.

The resources were reviewed as part of the ongoing SLSA course review schedule which ensures that national resources continue to achieve their intended purpose, meet best practice, and align with applicable units of competency (UOC).

Two Working Groups were established from the membership for the duration of the review; a Powercraft Course Design Working Group and a Powercraft Training Manual Review Working Group. These Working Groups worked closely with the Powercraft Advisory Group and Lifesaving and Education committees throughout the review process.

The new techniques introduced are practiced and trained through some state-based professional development programs such as ALBERT. Consideration was also given to reducing the number of major incidents and injuries which occurred with IRBs.

The reviewed resources have been through several rounds of consultation, including national piloting to ensure that it meets SLS expectations and is relevant to all states.

This circular gives an overview of the course components and national resources provided to help deliver the course. A more detailed *IRB 2024 Course Resource Change Register* is available in the SLS Members Area.

Course components

The IRB Crew (IRBC) course has been designed to be delivered using a blended learning approach. This means that participants will learn using a variety of methods, including eLearning and face-to-face sessions.

1. **Online**

The eLearning modules are completed in the participant's own time and are recommended to be concluded prior to the first practical skills session. Candidates will be issued a certificate on successful completion.

There are 11 eLearning modules in total as follows:

Module	Title	Manual Chapter	IRBC (approx. 3 hours)	SMIRBD (approx. 3 hrs 40 mins)
1	Intro to IRBs in SLS	1	8 mins	8 mins
2	IRB Equipment & Preparing to Operate	2 and 5	25 mins	33 mins
3a	Safety & Wellbeing - General	3	16 mins	18 mins
3b	Safety & Wellbeing - Injuries	3	8 mins	12 mins
3c	Safety & Wellbeing - Risk Mgt & Fatigue Mgt	3	17 mins	26 mins
4	Regulatory Requirements	4	10 mins	10 mins
5	IRB Operations	6	14 mins	38 mins
6	IRB Rescues	7	30 mins	26 mins
7	IRB Emergencies & Troubleshooting	8	12 mins	26 mins
8	Search and Rescue (SAR)	9	26 mins	25 mins
Assessment	Multiple Choice Assessment		16 questions	26 questions

2. Face-to-face sessions

The face-to-face sessions require members to attend training in person. During this time facilitators will build on the participants' eLearning, and guide participants through activities and scenarios. They will be both dry and wet sessions, with candidates required to practice and demonstrate techniques on land before going into the water. It is recommended that wet sessions are practiced in calm water before progressing to surf.

IRB Crew Course Session Title	Type of session	Time (20 hours)
Course introduction	Dry	30 minutes
Pre and Post Operational Duties	Dry	2 hours
Introduction to Crewing an IRB	Dry	1 hour 30 minutes
Crewing the IRB – Calm Water	Wet	3 hours
IRB Emergency Procedures & Towing	Wet & Dry	3 hours
IRB Rescues – Calm Water	Wet	3 hours 30 minutes
Crewing the IRB – In surf	Wet	3 hours
IRB Search & Rescue – In Surf	Wet	3 hours 30 minutes

Silver Medallion IRB Driver Session Title	Type of session	Time (30 hours 30 minutes)
Course introduction	Dry	30 minutes
Pre and Post Operational Duties	Dry	1 hour 30 minutes
Introduction to Driving an IRB	Dry	1 hour
Maintenance	Dry	2 hours 30 minutes
Driving the IRB – Calm Water	Wet	3 hours
IRB Rescues – Calm Water	Wet & Dry	3 hours
IRB Rescues – Calm Water	Wet	3 hours 30 minutes
IRB Towing, Emergencies, and Search & Rescue	Wet	4 hours
Driving in IRB – In Surf	Wet	3 hours 30 minutes
Advanced Driving Skills - In Surf	Wet	4 hours
IRB Rescues - In Surf	Wet	4 hours

National course resources

The following resources will be provided by SLSA in the SLS Members Area from the 1st July 2024 to assist with the delivery of the course.

1. Course Overview v6 March 2024
This course overview document outlines the award summary, units of competency, entry requirements and learning outcomes. This replaces the previous syllabus documents.

2. 9th edition IRB Training Manual
It was agreed at an early stage in the review process by the Powercraft Advisory Group that the RWC components currently within the 8th edition Powercraft Training Manual would not be included in the new manual. Instead, a separate 1st edition RWC Training Manual will be developed as part of the RWC course review scheduled for the 2024/25 season (release 2025/26). The 9th edition IRB Training Manual is available as a digital manual in Manula; where the PSAR35 and others are located. The manual is free for all members and can be accessed [here.](here)

3. eLearning (available in your state LMS)

eLearning has been introduced for both the IRBC and SMIRBD courses. This provides flexible learning options for members by allowing them to complete the theory component in their own time and introduce them to the information prior to the practical skill sessions. The use of instructional videos throughout eLearning will ensure that techniques are nationally communicated. Knowledge questions will reinforce their learning, and the use of branching scenarios puts concepts into realistic situations which the candidate may be faced with during their duties. The final module in each course includes multiple choice theory questions which form part of the assessable items.

4. Delivery and assessment guide v6 May 2024
The delivery and assessment guide (DAG) is a document given to Trainers and Assessors (TAFs) to help deliver the course. It provides an overview of the course components, lists the required resources and equipment, and includes session plans for the face-to-face sessions. It also includes a copy of the Assessment Portfolio. The Appendix has a copy of the multiple-choice theory questions from eLearning, the SLSA Powercraft Code of Conduct and IRB Drill Sheet. Adding the IRB Drill sheet will provide TAFs with some ideas to include in training to help develop and practice the necessary skills before assessment.

4. PowerPoint v2 April 2024

A PowerPoint presentation has been provided for the first dry face-to-face session only and should be used as a prompt. The remainder of the face-to-face sessions will be completed with the IRB.

5. Assessment portfolio v2 May 2024

The assessment portfolio provides all the fields required to determine whether participants have met the requirements to be deemed competent in the award. This includes the log of training hours, third party report, observation and scenario checklist and a paper-based risk assessment (if applicable). Additional evidence that will need to be attached to the assessment portfolio include the eLearning completion certificate and proof of completion of the risk assessment from the SLS operations app or similar (if applicable). The log of training hours has been updated to allow TAFs to better track what content is covered in each session.

Recommendations for delivery and assessment

Prior to course commencement

As the courses have approximately three hours of eLearning, that are recommended to be completed prior to the face-to-face sessions, it is advised that participants are given access to the course at least two weeks prior to their first face-to-face sessions so they have sufficient time to complete. It is also a good idea to ensure that

participants are aware of the requirement as they may not immediately access their eLearning and realise the duration.

The following is a checklist that is provided to participants in the eLearning, this should be reinforced with reminders prior to their first face-to-face session:

In preparation for your face-to-face sessions make sure you have:

- *Completed your eLearning and online assessments*
- *Downloaded the Operations app. and have access to the Surf Risk Rating (or equivalent)*
- *Completed the Entry Requirements Confirmation (SMIRBD only)*

Face-to-face sessions

It is recommended that TAFs complete the eLearning and read the DAG prior to delivering the course so they are familiar with the content. To ensure the theory content is engaging, interactive activities and discussions should be utilised.

The first dry session should be delivered in a classroom setting with access to sufficient tables and chairs as well as access to a projector which will allow PowerPoint to be clearly displayed. The remaining dry sessions can be delivered where access to the craft is readily available. This may be the beach, park or the IRB shed.

The wet sessions should start in a calm water location to give candidates the opportunity to learn and practice the techniques before progressing to a surf environment. Calm water training could be conducted at the beach beyond the break (where applicable) or at another suitable flat-water location, such as a river or harbour.

The use of SLSA approved water rescue manikins (LifeTec) is recommended during initial training, however, should not be used exclusively throughout the course unless a risk assessment deems them necessary. Candidates should practice patient pick-ups with both live patients and manikins, and only live patients should be used for assessment (unless deemed unsafe).

Prior to assessment IRBC course candidates should complete:
- Eight (8) nominal hours of practical demonstration, where the candidate is actively performing tasks as a trainee IRB Crewperson;
    - With at least 50% of the nominal hours to be sea time;
    - Over at least three (3) separate days;
    - In a variety of conditions.

Prior to assessment SMIRBD course candidates should complete:
- Twelve (12) nominal hours of practical demonstration, where the candidate is actively performing tasks as a trainee IRB Driver;
    - With at least 50% of the nominal hours to be sea time;
    - Over at least five (5) separate days;
    - In a variety of conditions.

IRB TAF Professional Development Requirements

To ensure that all IRB TAFs are comfortable with the new resources and techniques they will need to complete the following professional development to be re-endorsed as an IRB TAF:

- Complete the IRB TAF eLearning covering the key content updates. This covers two (2) modules of the eLearning for both the IRB Crew and SMIRB Driver course being the operations and rescues modules (TAFs are also encouraged to review all the new eLearning content for the IRB Crew and Driver Course to familiarise themselves with the new eLearning content that members will cover, however this is not mandatory).

- Attend the TAF Professional Development Webinar to go through the key changes and rationale on Thursday 4th July at 7pm AEST or Tuesday 16th July at 7pm AEST.
- Attend a Professional Development practical skills session delivered by your state/ territory

For more information on the IRB TAF PD Requirements, please refer to the *IRB TAF Professional Development Requirements* document in the SLS Members Area.

FAQ's

Q As a current IRB Driver or IRB Crew am I required to upgrade my qualification?

A There will be no additional requirements for members to upgrade their qualifications. Elements of the key changes will be incorporated into the IRB skills maintenance requirements over a couple of seasons starting in the 2025/26 season.

Q Do I need to get a new award to continue to drive or crew an IRB?

A No, there are no upgrade requirements.

Q As an IRB Trainer, Assessor or Facilitator what do I need to do to keep delivering IRB courses?

A Complete the 3 steps of professional development listed in the IRB TAF Professional Development section of this circular.

Q What happens if I do not complete the TAF Professional Development?

A TAFs will have 12 months to complete the PD, once your state starts delivering IRB courses with the new resources you will be unable to deliver these courses as a qualified TAF until you complete the PD

Q What happens if a member that holds the IRB Driver or Crew qualification misses their skills maintenance proficiency during the period where changes are being covered?

A Like any other missed award skills maintenance they will need to cover any content that was covered in the seasons where they were un-proficient.

Q How can members access the online manual?

A Through the Training Resource tab in eLearning, or via https://www.manula.com/manuals/slsa/irb