

16 REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND LIVEABILITY

16.1 Beach Lifeguard Services 2023/2024 Annual Report

CSP Objective: Outcome 1.2: We love where we live; we have the services and facilities we need the natural beauty of our surroundings enhances our active and healthy lifestyle.

CSP Strategy: 1.2.2 Take steps to feel safe wherever we are, any time of day or night.

Delivery Program: 1.2.2.1 Implement the Council Lifeguard Strategy 2025 to keep our nominated beaches safe for users; supporting training, equipment provision and upkeep staffing

Item 16.1

Summary

A report has been completed on the Kiama Council Lifeguards Beach Seasonal Operation for 2023/2024. This report is attached for Councilor's information.

Financial implication

The lifeguard services are funded under Council's operational budget.

There are no financial implication arising from this report.

Risk implication

By Council providing Lifeguard services and beach supervision it reduces the risk of drownings and personal injury.

Policy

Lifeguard Services Strategy 2025

Consultation (internal)

Manager Property & Recreation

Communication/Community engagement

N/A

Attachments

1 Ocean Lifeguard Seasonal Report 2023-2024 - PDF [↓](#)

Enclosures

Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

- Note the report of the Kiama Council Lifeguards Beach Seasonal Operation for 2023/2024.

Report of the Director Infrastructure and Liveability

16.1 Beach Lifeguard Services 2023/2024 Annual Report (cont)

2. Acknowledge the efforts of Council's lifeguard team and our volunteer partners in managing a successful and safe season for our community

Background

At the conclusion of the beach patrol Council's Lifeguard Supervisor prepares a report for the information of the Council. The 2023/2024 season report is attached, with the following key findings for the season:

- Over 275,000 visitors to our beaches during this season.
- Council lifeguards operated a total of 375 patrol days - 207 days at beaches where the surf clubs also provide patrol services to the public plus 168 days at the non-surf club beaches.
- Kiama Municipal Council beaches experienced an overall increase in attendance during the season.
- There was a total of 104 rescues during the season.

Incidents, rescues and first aid treatments were lower than the previous season, and there were no fatalities.



Kiama Council Ocean Lifeguards Seasonal Report 23/24

Strategic choices for a sustainable future



Item 16.1

Attachment 1

Annual Lifeguard Services Report

Kiama Council Ocean Lifeguard Season 2023/2024

Introduction

Over the last seven months Kiama Council lifeguards have been diligently monitoring visitors and locals to our seven stunning beaches. This report encapsulates the fantastic job Council's lifeguards have provided to the public, ensuring that all visitors are protected and kept out of harm's way.

This report does not contain any of the three local volunteer surf lifesaving club statistics.

Executive summary

At the commencement of the 2023-2024 season, Surf Beach saw an increase in visitor numbers. From the first patrol on September 25th to the final patrol on the 26th of April, the beaches witnessed a total footfall exceeding 275,000 visitors, reaffirming that Kiama's beaches are a favourite destination for holiday makers. While this marked a slight decrease from the previous season, it did little to dampen the spirit our team of dedicated lifeguards.

Spring Patrols

Spring shoulder season (September-November) saw Surf Beach hosting 12,612 beach goers. This is a welcomed 17% increase from the previous season. This influx can be attributed to a particularly warm school holiday period.

Peak season patrols

As summer peaked, so did the visitor numbers to Surf Beach and Bombo Beach, who showed an increase in visitor numbers over the same period last year. Our beaches welcomed an average of 1,100 sun seekers per day across the seven beaches.

Seven Mile	1,470
Surf Beach	885
Kendall's Beach	732
Easts Beach	727
Werri Beach	682
Bombo Beach	588
Jones Beach	347

**Average daily attendance*

February weekends

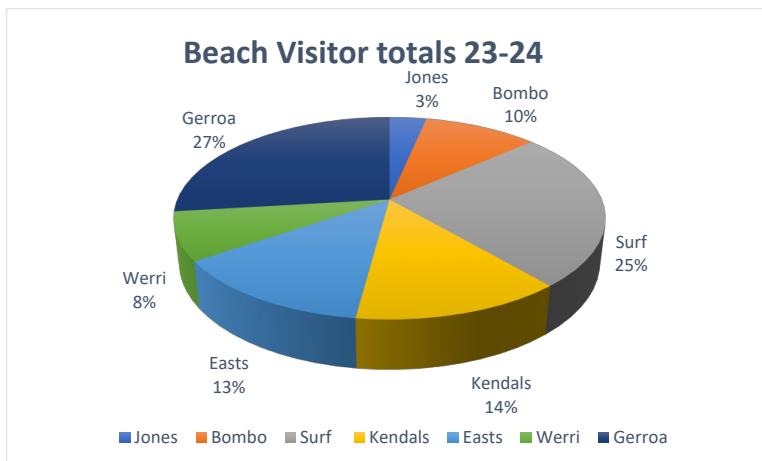
February weekends witnessed 26,701 visitors across the four non surf club beaches. This attendance is slightly lower than the same time last year and can be attributed to poor weather conditions over the last two weekends in the month.

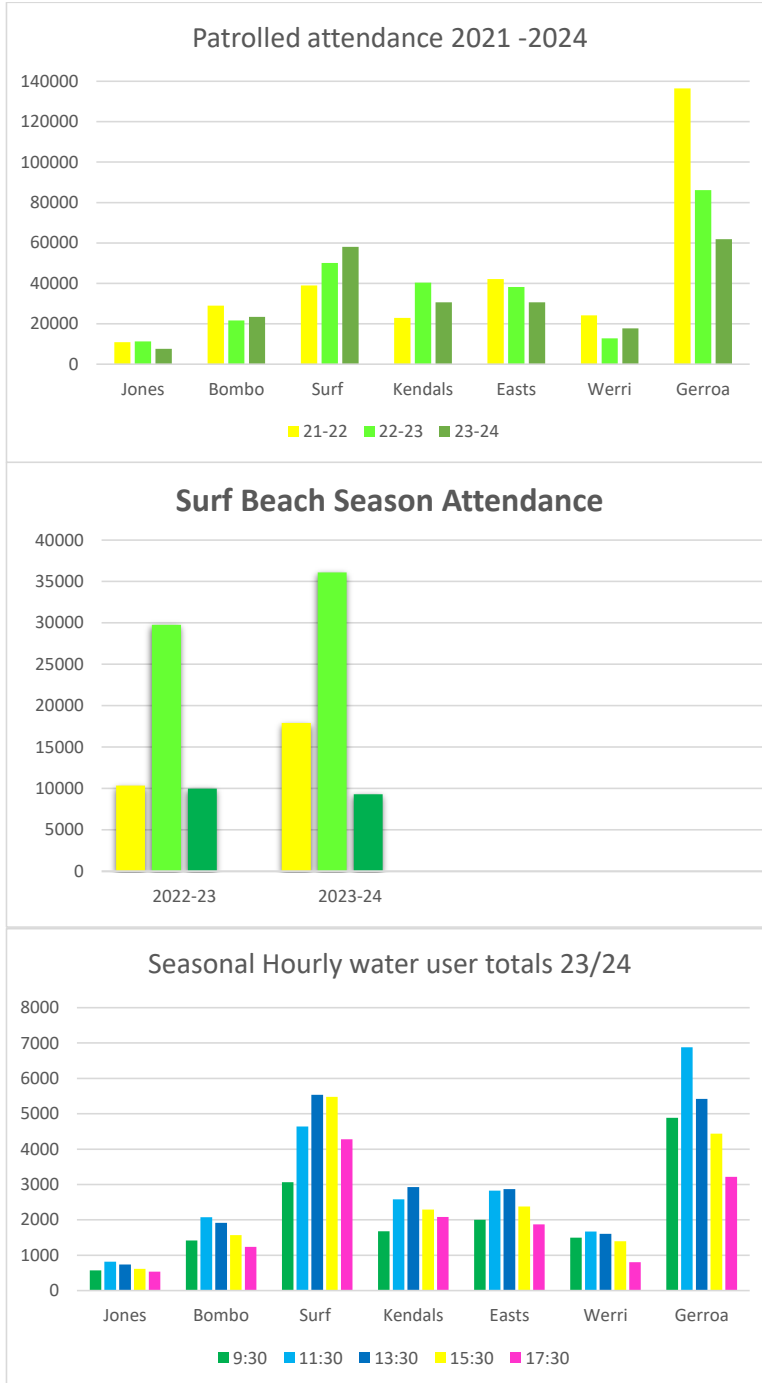
Bombo Beach	3,759
Kendall's Beach	5,996
East's Beach	5,681
Seven Mile Beach	11,265

**Total visitor numbers for weekends in February*

Autumn season

Autumn brought with it some favourable beach conditions especially late on in the season. Surf Beach recorded 9,300 visitors over the period from March through to April, while a flurry of warm days during school holidays in late April saw Werri record 3200 visitors over nine days.



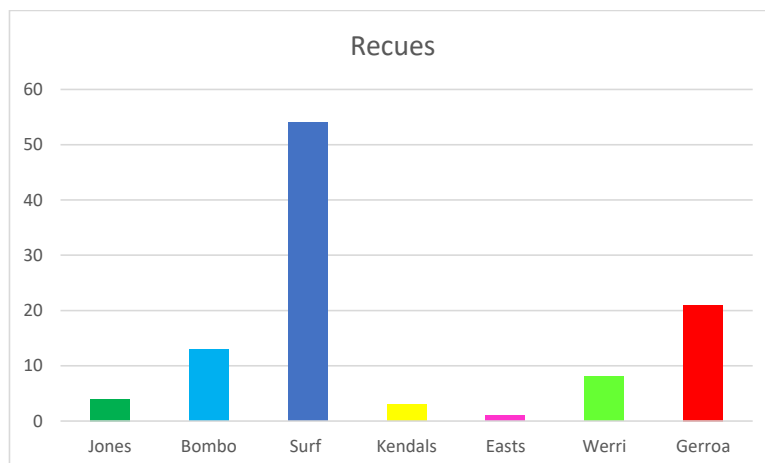
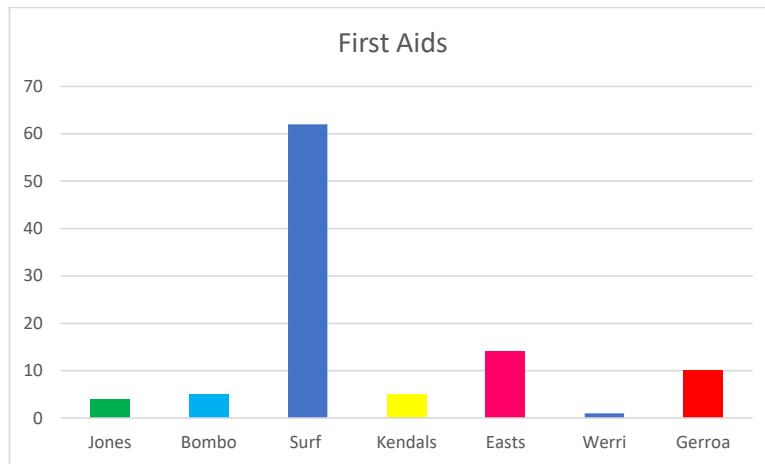


Vigilance and Service

Beside the dip in visitor numbers, safety remained Council lifeguard's unwavering priority. General rescues saw a slight dip from the previous season with 104 preformed by our vigilant team.

Surf Beach attributed to over 50% of rescues as a strong rip cemented itself on the south/mid part of the beach. These rescues were more of an assistance back onto the sand bank rather than casualties close to going under and requiring ambulance calls.

First aids followed suit with 101 incidents recorded across the seven beaches. Notably only six calls were made to Ambulance NSW which underscored the effectiveness of our proactive lifeguard service.

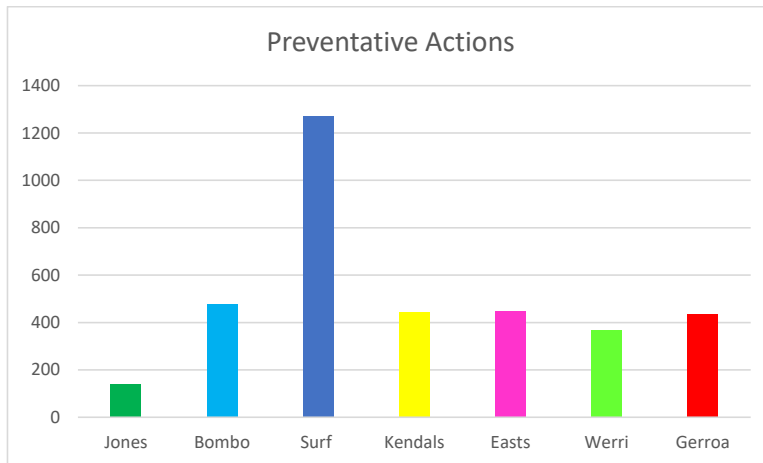


Strategic moves and seasonal shifts

Guided by Council’s Lifeguard Service Strategy, our patrols maintained a steady watch over both surf club and non-surf club beaches.

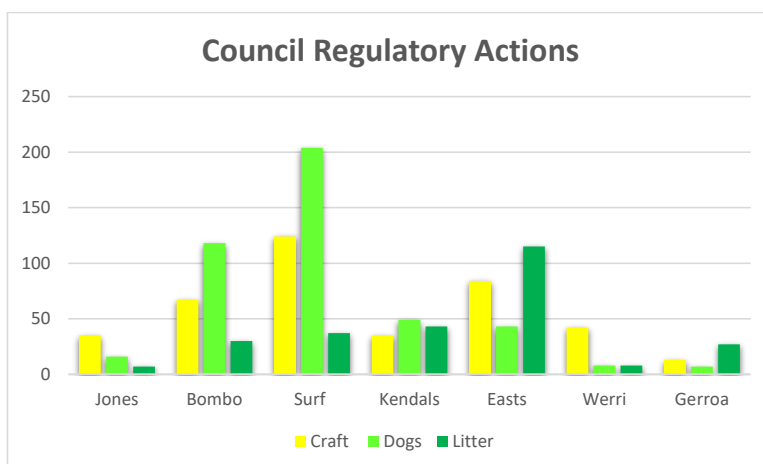
Seasonal adjustments made last season were continued this year, including a later start (10:00am – 5:30pm) as well as the extended weekend patrols throughout February.

With a ration of rescues to preventative actions exceeding expectations at 1:42, our lifeguard’s proactive stance shone through, affirming Councils’ commitment to safeguarding all visitors at its beaches.



Preventive actions are when lifeguards engage with public ensuring they are aware of the dangers that a posed to them.

Council’s lifeguards are not only proactive in keeping visitors to the beaches safe but are just as proactive in upholding the bylaws.



Empowering the next wave

Beyond performing rescues and beach patrols, our lifeguard service are champions of education and empowering the youth through surf education awareness programs, by giving them the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the surf safely.

From sun safety to surf survival techniques, we inform them of the inherent dangers when visiting our beaches. All five of the local primary school's form part of the surf survival program (Years 1-6). This program is delivered in September in time for the school holidays in the lead up to spring.

Lifesaving Services

Kiama's Lifeguard Service operates in conjunction with our volunteer surf lifesaving clubs, ensuring seamless coverage and community support.

While the three surf clubs take the helm at Jones Beach, Surf Beach and Werri Beach on weekends and public holidays, the lifeguard service operates vigilantly throughout the week, weekends, and public holidays at the non-surf club beaches.

Beach	Patrol Days	Patrol Season
Jones Beach	26	6-week summer M-F
Bombo Beach	42	6-week summer weekends Feb
Surf Beach	146	Sept – Apr M-F
Kendall's Beach	42	6-week summer weekends Feb
East's Beach	42	6-week summer weekends Feb
Werri Beach	35	6-week summer M-F Easter holidays M-F
Seven Mile Beach	42	6-week summer weekends Feb

