
Wednesday, 3 June 2009

\$1.1M TOWARDS A NEW SURF CENTRAL FOR STATE'S LIFESAVERS

Emergency Services Minister, Michael Wright, has announced Volunteer lifesavers will receive a \$1.1 million funding injection in tomorrow's 2009-10 State Budget.

The funds will go towards the construction of a \$4.3 million Surf Central Headquarters for the organisation at Barcoo Road, West Beach.

The organisation's Torrensville head office is seriously over-crowded and life saving materials and equipment is stored in members' backyards across the metropolitan area.

A new headquarters is also needed to provide support for the community and a venue for training programs provided by SLSSA along with facilities for Surf Life Saving's growing membership, Mr Wright said.

He said the building would be used as Surf Life Savings administrative headquarters, training centre, state communications centre and operations centre

"The beachfront access makes it ideal for emergency response and training," he said.

"We are proud to be able to support the fantastic work of the State's 7,000 surf life savers, they have an impeccable volunteer record of saving lives, preventing drowning incidents and educating the community."

The assisted funding will allow all vessels to be centralised, and will house 2 water rescue crafts, 2 jet rescue boats and 1 inflatable rescue boat at its new West Beach Headquarters.

"Our volunteers put in more than 59,000 patrol hours, have rescued 276 people, administered first aid to 686 beachgoers and provided assistance to another 15,247.

"SLSSA General Manager Elaine Farmer welcomed the funding boost "

"Thousands of our volunteers spend thousands of hours each year helping keep South Australians safe and out of harm's way," Ms Farmer said.

"This magnificent new building will be a reflection of the important role Surf Life Saving plays in water safety around the State."

Minister Wright said since coming to office, the Rann Government has provided over \$7.6 million to assist Surf Life Saving SA (SLSSA).

This includes \$3.8 million to redevelop clubs at Christies Beach, Somerton, North Haven and Brighton, and \$40,000 towards the “On the Same Wave” program, aimed at breaking down the cultural barriers to deliver water safety education.

Minister Wright said the volunteers provided an incomparable contribution to the South Australian community.

“Surf life savers provide an outstanding service all year round and we greatly value all that they do.