

THE
APOLA
NEWSLETTER
AN INSIGHT INTO
AUSTRALIAN
PROFESSIONAL
LIFEGUARDING



PRETTY IN PINK!

JULZ'S GIANT JOURNEY FOR
MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE
& SURFRIDER FOUNDATION



**JERSEY (U.K.)
LIFEGUARD REUNION**

MARK SCULLY'S MISSION TO
REUNITE GENERATIONS OF
OVERSEAS AUSSIES



THE MIDAS TOUCH

A PEAK INTO THE GUARDS
OF THE GOLD COAST

THIS MONTH: 'RED ALGAE'!



But First, Behind The APOLA Logo.

By Chanan Clark.

The Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguard Association. Born from the notion that extensive experience in any ocean activity has the potential to breed quality ocean rescuers.

In 1914, Les Clark became Australia's first Professional Lifeguard, being paid 3 pounds a week in exchange for providing a rescue service at Austinmer Beach, NSW. The local council acknowledged Les' fine ocean skills and decided to put them to use, which turned out to be a "sound investment" with him almost immediately having to save a visitor who ran into trouble at his beach. Since that day in 1914, it became apparent that providing an experienced lifeguard service is an intelligent and necessary action.

Fast forward to the present day, and we see that professional lifeguards have been responsible for the introduction of rescue boards, jet skis, vehicles, surf education and many other arrows to the life guarding quiver. All of this is due to the eclectic watermen and women who bring their ideas and skill sets into the ranks. As guards, it is an amazing concept to reflect on, knowing that we have all been a part of this rich history and also, have a hand in shaping it's future.

This brings me to the above APOLA logo. The logo concept was conjured by Ian Picton, a dedicated and passionate lifeguard supervisor of Wollongong City Council. The same council which Austinmer Beach falls under, and as you now know, Australia's first professionally patrolled location. Rather fitting that the current symbol of Australian Professional Lifeguards also spawned from it's geographical origins.

The symbology is threefold. The acronym is self explanatory, the graphic however is multi layered, representing the head and arms of a swimmer, the sun rising over the sea and also, the graceful flight of a sea bird. Coastal nature personified, a reminder of our duty to protect said nature and the lives who come to visit it.

Know next time you step foot on the beach, that you *ARE* a part of history in our rare and elite force. Lets make our chapter count.

Views expressed in the APOLA Newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of APOLA or the Editorial Team

“Red Tides”. Red Algae Blooms along the coast.

By now, guards will have realised that each APOLA newsletter has an informative section on a common marine species or occurrences. We began with Sharks, moved to The Blue Armada and we are now onto Red Algae. The object is to provide our professional service with a *minimum* nationwide knowledge base, so that guards are able to articulate to the public when asked about these common subjects. So if you get a slow day, take the time to brush up your knowledge and show the next inquisitive member of public, the exact reason why we are called PROFESSIONAL.

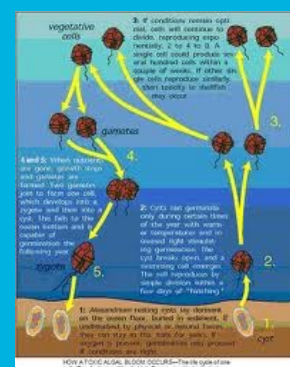
What is Red Algae and how does it occur?

Red Algal Blooms are large concentrations of the phytoplankton *Alexandrium*. This single cell dinoflagellate (seen in the 3rd picture down) has a cyclical life pattern that is largely dependant on many environmental factors. *Alexandrium* lays dormant on the ocean floor, covered by sediment and taking the form of a “cyst”, waiting for ideal germinating conditions.

When waters become warm, nutrient rich and there is ample sunlight, the *Alexandrium* cyst will germinate into a simple swimming cell and rise to the surface. If conditions remain optimal, they will then reproduce exponentially i.e 1 becomes 2 becomes 4 becomes 8 and so on. On the East Coast, the presence of this “red tide” usually coincides with the first warm currents hitting the nutrient rich winter waters and the stronger spring sun finally kicking in. As a positive, the red tide is sure sign that you can ditch the wetsuit and don the boardies again. Red tides also usually occur in periods of little to no wind and strong sunshine after a bout of heavy rains. On the surface, *Alexandrium* takes on the form of a “vegetative cell”, and it is in this state that it can cause great harm to marine life and humans.

When nutrient levels are no longer able to sustain the vegetative colony, the cells turn into what is known as a “gametes”, which basically allows the cells to re-merge. Two re-joined gametes is called a “zygote” which floats back to the ocean floor and buries itself in the sediment becoming a dormant “cyst” once again. The cyst will lay in wait all winter and will be capable to restart it’s life cycle again the following summer or simply, on the return of optimal spawning conditions.

Red Algal Blooms



Red Tides Continued...



What dangers are involved with a Red Tide?

Due to its rapid reproduction, phytoplankton *Alexandrium* quickly starves the local water of oxygen and has an immediate affect on fish. Quite simply, some fish will die of oxygen starvation. The aggressive multiplication of red algae also produces a toxic by-product which leaches into the water and is also released into the air like an aerosol. These toxic fumes attack the respiratory systems of birds and sea mammals (in particular the dugong, which favours warm and sun drenched waters too) and as a result deaths can occur.

Humans being mammals can be affected in very similar ways. Prolonged exposure to the toxic aerosol can cause respiratory irritations like coughing, sneezing and watery eyes, although such cases are rare. The greatest concern involving algal blooms to humans is the consumption of bivalve molluscs. **Filter feeders such as oysters, mussels, clams, scallops abalone and sea snails get a build up of the toxins in their filters and consumption of these contaminated shell fish has led to several human deaths.** Very clear warning to not chow the local shell fish situated amongst a bloom!

Upon contact, the toxic nature of phytoplankton *Alexandrium* can cause minor skin irritations on those people who are usually susceptible to grass rash and other similar skin allergies, but in general, it's fairly harmless. As always, its best to use your judgement and follow your council's standard operating procedure upon the presence of an algal bloom.

So in summary, you can tell concerned beach goers that the "red tide" isn't man-made pollution, but a sudden and brief cyclical occurrence. Any dead sea animals or birds that wash up on the shore during a "bloom", have died from either O₂ starvation or respiratory infection as a result of naturally produced toxins. It is in a humans best interest not to come into contact with the algal bloom or more importantly, not breathe the toxic fumes it creates and under no circumstances consume shell fish from the affected region until well after the bloom has dispersed.

Hope that this and the previous APOLA Newsletter information files have been of use!

Overseas Info

Mark's Mission: Gettin' the Jersey Boys Back!

Mark Scully, a permanent Senior Beach Lifeguard of Lake Macquarie Council is attempting one of the greatest reunions of all time. **The Jersey (UK) Lifeguard Reunion!** Yes, the reunion is for all of us who have done time on "The Rock" and have enjoyed everything it has to offer. So help Mark out in his quest so we can all reminisce the tradition of Australian Guards visiting the little isle in The Channel!

When: May 1st 2015 - May 3rd 2015 (Immediately after the APOLA National Conference)

Where: **Fri 1st**, Hunter Valley Vineyard Tour & Lunch then evening drinks @ Honeysuckle Pub Newcastle Harbour (Dinner and Drinks at own expense)

Sat 2nd, Harbour View Function Centre, above The Brewery @ Newcastle Harbour (3 course dinner meal, Team Photos from 1958-2014, Jersey Highlights) **MOST POPULAR!!!**

Sun 3rd, Nobby's Beach Beach BBQ, Beach Activities and Wreath Ceremony for 23 Deceased Australian/Jersey Lifeguards.

So Far?: There are 112 lifeguards and 30 partners attending so get in quick! Also, any payments received before 28th of February will go in the lucky draw to have the cost of one dinner refunded!! Please contact **Mark Scully** for cost and attendance sheets.

How Can I Help?: You can maybe help track down some of the 45 M.I.A. guards and some of the missing Jersey Guard Photos. Contact Mark Scully for Details.

Contact: Mark Scully. markoceanman@hotmail.com 0429 034 936



SISTER IS DOING IT FOR HERSELF!

Juliana Bahr-Thomson...

I've got a new hero. A 10 year Newcastle professional lifeguard with one hell of an adventurous spirit!

Juliana, or "Julz" as she is affectionately known, is planning to paddle from Newcastle to Bondi on Thursday. Wow!

The purpose of Julz's paddle is to raise funds for Motor Neurone Disease and the Surf Rider Foundation, and she plans to propel herself the entire distance on her paddle board without any water safety and completely by herself. Daring stuff!!

It must be recognised that the original idea came from a group of Lake Macquarie boys, who are considering to complete the same paddle but with speed being the focus, assaulting the course as a team. We look forward to seeing their awesome display of speed and skills in the future!

Julz however, decided she would trade speed and teams for a more organic and spiritual approach. Initially, Julz enlisted the company of a fellow professional guard who recently had a family member pass away from M.N.D. With less than a week out, that paddler required surgery on a badly broken leg after a surfing accident and like a true professional, Juliana stopped, regathered and continued on with her ambition, this time solo. What a legend!

Please get behind this courageous and determined lifeguard. Her skills, beauty and character are truly an asset to our service. If you would like to follow her, this is her schedule.

Day 1: 26th of February 2015: Merewether Beach - Soldiers Point

Day 2: 27th of February 2015: Soldiers Point - Killcare

Day 3: 28th of February 2015: Killcare - Manly

Day 4: 1st of March 2015: Manly - Bondi

Donate to the cause so all her efforts are worthwhile! We wish you the best of luck on your epic journey Julz, give 'em hell!

Donate at:

www.ozcrowd.com/campaigns/150km-paddle-for-motor-neuron-disease-surf-rider-foundation

King Midas and his Coast!

This month's service overview... The Gold Coast!!



Gold Coast's Bio

- * 60km Area from Couran Cove to Rainbow Bay
- * 37 Full Time Staff, 140 Seasonal Staff
- * 26 Year Round Beaches, 42 Seasonal Beaches
- * 30 4WD's, 12 Jetskis & 12 ATV's
- * Australia's Largest Lifeguard Service
- * First Service to Implement Obs Tower System
- * 39 Observation Towers



A reputable service.

"A good lifeguard knows when to take his shirt off, and when to put it on." - Warren Young

They were the words uttered to me by the Gold Coast Chief Lifeguard at last year's annual conference and I have a feeling they'll stay with me forever. I believe a Lifeguard Service directly reflects it's leadership, and judging by the fine job the Gold Coast Guards do day in and day out, the top must have everything in order.

But quite rightly, Warren is always quick to point out that his staff make him look good! "Our staff have done a wonderful job and we are so lucky to have a core group of permanent and casual staff who can support and train our newcomers."

In particular Gold Coast would like to welcome two experienced French Guards to the team- Yannick Descamps and Victor Prual. Lifeguard Superintendent Chris Maynard said "they have been doing a great job and are an asset to the team"

Shout out to Kenny Wallace who donned the Santa outfit and delivered lollies to the crowd via a jet ski driven by Michael Chan. To prove my point the Gold Coast boys did this off their own back using their own money. Such is their passion for the job.

So thank you to all the Gold Coast Guards for setting such a great example, particularly being the largest service in the country and kudos to Warren Young for achieving over 40 years of loyal service to the City of Gold Coast.

If you would like to represent your council in future editions, please send any relevant pictures and information to: **Chanan Clark**, APOLA National Information Services Co-Ordinator, **0423 715 140**
chananclark@outlook.com