



BRONZE STAR AWARD GUIDE

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BRONZE



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
AUSTRALIA

An initiative of Royal Life Saving

think. act. save.

BRONZE STAR AWARD GUIDE

This award guide aims to provide the instructor and examiner with the information required for each award item in a practical and straight-forward way. Following the overview of the Bronze Star Award Criteria, each award item is provided with the following detail:

- Award criteria
- Must see assessment criteria
- Assessment method
- Teaching tips
- Supporting information

The Teaching Plan on pages 10-13 will aid the instructor in organising and delivering the award. The plan outlines the key topics and detail for both the theory and practical components of the award and provides a timing guide to assist with time management. Remember, candidates will best learn by practising the skills reinforced with the theory along the way, rather than spend too much time teaching theory by itself.

The plan is a guide only and should be modified to suit the availability of water space, the delivery location, the number of candidates and the delivery timetable options.

Award delivery and administration information is also provided to ensure the awards are administered in accordance to Royal Life Saving's policies and procedures.

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BRONZE STAR

The Bronze Star is an award for secondary school students.

The Bronze Star will test the candidate's knowledge, fitness, skills and judgement and is a step towards achieving the iconic Bronze Medallion. Earning the Bronze Star is a real achievement, and successful candidates will become part of the deep history of lifesaving. Candidates will develop problem-solving and decision-making skills in learning how to recognise an emergency and make an assessment before and during a rescue. Candidates will be tested on a range of rescue skills where they will be required to have an understanding of lifesaving and rescue principles.

Holders of this award are not trained or qualified to attempt any form of contact rescue involving conscious casualties in deep water.

Most importantly, the Bronze Star provides candidates with the skills and knowledge to participate in aquatic recreation in a safe and enjoyable manner.

SWIMMING AND LIFESAVING MANUAL

The Swimming and Lifesaving manual is the benchmark publication for the teaching of water safety, swimming, survival, lifesaving and rescue skills. It provides a complete guide for the knowledge and skills required to achieve all of Royal Life Saving's lifesaving awards. The Swimming and Lifesaving manual can be purchased through Royal Life Saving offices.

BRONZE e-LIFESAVING

Bronze e-Lifesaving is an interactive e-learning program that can be easily implemented in the classroom and has strong links to learning content outcomes in the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education.

Utilising aquatic themes, the program challenges students to explore risk-taking behaviour, personal attitudes and beliefs, personal relationships and to develop skills in making informed decisions, refusal tactics and leadership. There are three modules:

- Hazards and Personal Safety
- Risks and Peer Influences
- Responding to Emergencies

Bronze e-Lifesaving covers some of the theory components of the Bronze Star and is complementary to learning the knowledge required for this award. For a broader learning experience, it is recommended to complete the Bronze e-Lifesaving program prior to undertaking the Bronze Star award. This can be completed in the classroom or as home study. The following table outlines the links with the Bronze Star award and the Australian Health and Physical Education Curriculum.

For more information on Bronze e-Lifesaving and how to enrol, visit www.e-lifesaving.com.au



Links between Bronze Star, Bronze e-Lifesaving and the Australian Health and Physical Education Curriculum

Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 1: Hazards and Personal Safety	
Bronze Star Links	Overview of drowning in Australia Hazards in aquatic environments Survival strategies
Australian Curriculum Links Years 7 and 8	Being healthy, safe and active Evaluate strategies to manage personal, physical and social changes that occur as they grow older (ACPPS071) Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS073) Learning through movement Evaluate and justify reasons for decisions and choices of action when solving movement challenges (ACPMP087) Modify rules and scoring systems to allow for fair play, safety and inclusive participation (ACPMP088)
Years 9 and 10	Being healthy, safe and active Propose, practise and evaluate responses in situations where external influences may impact on their ability to make healthy and safe choices (ACPPS092) Learning through movement Devise, implement and refine strategies demonstrating leadership and collaboration skills when working in groups or teams (ACPMP105)
Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 2: Risks and Peer Influences	
Bronze Star Links	Assessing and minimising risk Safe behaviour Contributing factors to drowning incidents
Australian Curriculum Links Years 7 and 8	Being healthy, safe and active Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS073) Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing Investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing (ACPPS074) Learning through movement Evaluate and justify reasons for decisions and choices of action when solving movement challenges (ACPMP087)
Years 9 and 10	Being healthy, safe and active Evaluate factors that shape identities, and analyse how individuals impact the identities of others (ACPPS089) Examine the impact of changes and transitions on relationships (ACPPS090) Plan, rehearse and evaluate options (including CPR and first aid) for managing situations where their own or others' health, safety and wellbeing may be at risk (ACPPS091) Propose, practise and evaluate responses in situations where external influences may impact on their ability to make healthy and safe choices (ACPPS092)
Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 3: Responding to Emergencies	
Bronze Star Links	What is water safety? Rescue principles Categories of people in difficulty Order of rescue Swimming rescues Outline of DRSABCD action plan Overview of emergency care Initiative scenarios
Australian Curriculum Links Years 7 and 8	Being healthy, safe and active Practise and apply strategies to seek help for themselves or others (ACPPS072)
Years 9 and 10	Being healthy, safe and active Plan, rehearse and evaluate options (including CPR and first aid) for managing situations where their own or others' health, safety and wellbeing may be at risk (ACPPS091) Learning through movement Devise, implement and refine strategies demonstrating leadership and collaboration skills when working in groups or teams (ACPMP105)

AWARD DELIVERY & ADMINISTRATION

REQUIREMENTS

Theory and dry practical

A room capable of seating all candidates with tables and chairs for writing on should be available for theory. The room (or an alternative room) must also provide floor space, which is suitable for using resuscitation manikins.

Wet practical

A swimming pool and surrounding area suitable for the practical pool skills. It is recommended the pool is a minimum of 25 metres with shallow and deep water to perform the required award items.

Other aquatic environments may be considered if there is an appropriate swimming area and a complete risk assessment undertaken. Adequate first aid equipment, trained personnel and emergency procedures must be in place. Water and weather conditions must be checked before and monitored during the program.

Equipment

- Rigid rescue items such as: rescue pole, water noodle, kickboards, body board, boat paddle, tree branch.
- Non-rigid rescue items such as: towels, clothing.
- Buoyant items such as: buckets, balls, esky, large plastic container, kickboards, rescue ring.
- Non-buoyant items such as: diving bricks, dive rings, rescue manikins (filled with water).
- Lifejackets.
- Unweighted rope (10 metres).

Candidates will need the following:

- Swimwear.
- Trousers.
- Long-sleeved shirt.

Learning resources

- Swimming and Lifesaving manual is the award text (current edition 6th).
- Bronze e-Lifesaving is an online program that encompasses some of the theory for the Bronze awards. Visit www.e-lifesaving.com.au for information.
- www.royallifesaving.com.au for National Drowning Reports, fact sheets and resources.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of a candidate's competence should be matched against the 'must see' criteria of each test item. Each candidate must demonstrate competence in each of the test items to achieve the award.

All candidates are to be submitted to the same test irrespective of when and where the assessment takes place.

Prior assessment of skills

Where possible, it is strongly recommended that candidates are assessed on their swimming ability first. This will determine whether they have the capability to attempt all the award items or whether they should attempt a lower award.

Instructor assessed items

These items may be assessed by the Instructor in advance of a Royal Life Saving Examiner's attendance. If the Examiner has any doubt about the ability of the candidate, these items may be reassessed at the Examiner's discretion.

These are indicated in the award criteria by an (I).

Examiner assessed items

These items must be assessed by the Royal Life Saving Examiner.

Examiners are permitted to examine as many test items as they consider necessary to determine the competency of the candidate.

These are indicated in the award criteria by an (E).

By using this system, it is hoped the time required to conduct testing will be minimised without compromising the Royal Life Saving standards.

ADMINISTRATION OF AWARDS

The administration of Royal Life Saving Awards is managed by the Royal Life Saving office in each State or Territory. Administration processes and policies should be followed by instructors and examiners in accordance to the Royal Life Saving office with which they are associated.

Prior to commencing with the instruction of an award, please ensure all required resources, forms and examination papers have been acquired.

Royal Life Saving has the right to refuse to issue an award, or to cancel an award already made, for any examination which has not been arranged and/or conducted in accordance with the Society's current rules. Examinations may be conducted only by persons who have Examiner status at the appropriate level for awards undertaken.

Examination or assessment report forms must be completed including each candidate that has participated in the award. All required information must be included and legible. Completing the form in its entirety will assist with prompt and accurate processing of awards.

Payment of the scheduled certificate and/or medallion fee entitles successful candidates to receive the appropriate award.

Course award

Upon satisfactory completion of the Bronze Star the candidate will be awarded a RLSSA Bronze Star Award.

The award is only an indication of the competence of a person at the date of attainment of the award. Regular training is required to ensure that adequate standards are maintained.

A successful candidate will also be entitled to claim the RLSSA Resuscitation Awareness Award. (Additional fees apply).

Currency of award

The Bronze Star Award is an indication of the level of competency achieved at the venue and on the date of attainment.

WHERE TO NEXT?



Once candidates have achieved their Bronze Star they can continue on the lifesaving pathway. The next award is the Bronze Medallion.

The Bronze Medallion will develop their level of knowledge, judgement, technique and physical ability required to carry out safe water rescues.

There are further opportunities to develop lifesaving skills including participating in lifesaving sport competition, higher lifesaving awards and first aid courses.

CONTACT ROYAL LIFE SAVING IN YOUR STATE OR TERRITORY FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE WITH THE BRONZE STAR, OTHER LIFESAVING AWARDS OR YOUR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

BRONZE STAR AWARD CRITERIA

AIM: To develop skills and knowledge of safe water rescue and survival.

PREREQUISITE: Nil

THEORY (I)

1. Answer questions requiring an understanding of:
 - safe water practices
 - how to survive in the water
 - self-preservation in rescues
 - recognising an emergency
 - assessment before and during a rescue
 - priorities for rescue
 - treatment for shock
 - elementary after care
 - getting help
 - contacting emergency services
 - DRSABCD.

RESUSCITATION AWARENESS (I)

2. Demonstrate:
 - 2.1. checking for dangers
 - 2.2. assessing unconsciousness
 - 2.3. opening and clearing the airway
 - 2.4. checking for breathing
 - 2.5. positioning the casualty for CPR
 - 2.6. mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing
 - 2.7. mouth-to-nose rescue breathing
 - 2.8. chest compression
 - 2.9. the appropriate action for a casualty who vomits or regurgitates
 - 2.10. the appropriate action if an airway blockage is apparent
 - 2.11. the recovery position.

THROW (I)

3. A person is in difficulty 6 metres from safety.
 - Effect a throwing rescue using a lifejacket as a buoyant aid.

THROW UNWEIGHTED ROPE (I)

4. A person is in difficulty 10 metres from safety.
 - Perform a throwing rescue using an unweighted rope.
 - Secure the person at a point of safety.

RESCUE AND RESUSCITATION (I)

5. An unconscious and non-breathing person is floating face-down in deep water. The candidate should:
 - 5.1. enter the water and swim to the person
 - 5.2. turn the person over and tow 10 metres to shallow water
 - 5.3. call for assistance
 - 5.4. commence rescue breathing while wading to safety.

The components for the award item must be performed in the sequence listed.

ACCOMPANIED RESCUE (I)

6. A person is in difficulty 15 metres from safety. With a flotation aid:
 - 6.1. enter the water as for unknown conditions
 - 6.2. wade and swim to the person
 - 6.3. pass the aid to the person
 - 6.4. instruct in the use the aid
 - 6.5. accompany the person to safety
 - 6.6. secure the person at a point of safety.

The components for the award item must be performed in the sequence listed.

DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES (I)

7. Demonstrate the following:
 - 7.1. defensive position
 - 7.2. a reverse
 - 7.3. a leg block.

TOW (I)

8. A weak swimmer is in difficulty in deep water 20 metres from safety. With a non-rigid towing aid selected by the assessor:
 - 8.1. Enter deep water using a stride or compact jump
 - 8.2. swim to the person and adopt a defensive position
 - 8.3. offer the aid to the person and tow to safety
 - 8.4. assist the person out of the water using a stirrup lift.

The components for the award item must be performed in the sequence listed.

SURFACE DIVE (I)

9. Demonstrate a head-first and a feet-first surface dive in deep water. On each occasion collect an object from the bottom.

UNDERWATER SEARCH (I)

10. Demonstrate a search pattern in deep water.

INITIATIVE (I)

11. Demonstrate initiative in effecting a rescue of a person who is no more than 15 metres from safety. The assessor will:

- specify whether the person is injured, unconscious or a weak swimmer
- specify the distance the person is from safety
- ensure that three to five rescue aids are available.

On completing this test, the candidate may be asked to explain the reasons for the actions taken.

SURVIVAL SKILLS (I)

12. Dressed in swimwear, trousers and a long-sleeved shirt:
 - 12.1. float using hand sculling movements for 1 minute and then tread water for 1 minute, waving intermittently as if signalling for help
 - 12.2. put on a lifejacket in deep water and swim 50 metres
 - 12.3. demonstrate the HELP position
 - 12.4. climb out of the water.

SWIM (I)

13. Dressed in swimwear, swim continuously 300 metres:
 - 13.1. 100 metres freestyle
 - 13.2. 100 metres sidestroke
 - 13.3. 100 metres breaststroke

The target time for the swim is 10 minutes.

BRONZE STAR TEACHING PLAN

The teaching plan is a guide only and may be adjusted to suit the delivery mode, location, pool space availability and number of candidates. The candidates' previous experience in lifesaving and swimming abilities may also influence the teaching plan. The program may be structured as an intensive course or over a series of weeks to fit into a school term timetable.

TIME	CONTENT	RESOURCES / EQUIPMENT
5 minutes	ROYAL LIFE SAVING Brief overview of the history of Lifesaving in Australia. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First branch in NSW in 1894, other states followed • Dual system of lifesaving established in 1924 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 2-3
	Highlight the activities of Royal Life Saving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission statement • Advocacy, programs, training, sport, services and development 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 4-8
5 minutes	BRONZE STAR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the award scheme and pathway 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 9-11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the award criteria for the Bronze Star 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 186-187
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how initiative tests work, example scenarios, and the judgement skills candidates will need to consider. 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 92-93 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 3
10 minutes	DROWNING INCIDENTS Overview of drowning in Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual drowning death rates • Age and gender • Locations • Type of activity • Time of year • Contributing factors - alcohol 	National Drowning Reports www.royallifesaving.com.au Swimming and Lifesaving page 16 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 1 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 2
10 minutes	WATER SAFETY Discuss what is water safety? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety – a concern for yourself, a concern for others, awareness of dangers, minimising risks, prevention of aquatic incidents, knowing how and when to act in an emergency • Aquacode 	Swimming and Lifesaving page 21 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 3
	List items that should be considered when undertaking aquatic activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate clothing • Sun protection • Fluids (water, non-alcoholic) • Mobile phone 	Swimming and Lifesaving page 22
	Identify categories of signage and provide examples. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory signs • Warning signs 	Swimming and Lifesaving page 22
15 minutes	AQUATIC ENVIRONMENTS Identify and discuss the dangers associated with various aquatic environments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rivers • Lakes and dams • Farms • Beach and ocean • Swimming pools and spas • Home environment • Floods 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 23-31 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 1

15 minutes	<p>AQUATIC ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Outline safety guidelines for a variety of aquatic activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming at the pool, beach, river • Fishing at beach, lakes, river, rock fishing, boat fishing • Safe boating, power boats, canoes and kayaks • Lifejackets • Surfing • Recreational diving, snorkelling 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 32-37
15 minutes	<p>ENTRIES AND EXITS</p> <p>Highlight when and how to perform the following: slide in, step in, compact jump, dive entry, stride entry, accidental fall-in, deep water exit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerations for selecting an entry and exit • Identify WHEN each type of entry /exit is used • Explain HOW to perform each entry/exit 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 44-49
15 minutes	<p>SURVIVAL SKILLS</p> <p>Outline the key survival skills required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sculling skills – survival sculling, head-first, feet-first • Floating skills – back, front, rotations • Treading water • Surface diving – head-first, feet-first • Swimming underwater 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 50-58
15 minutes	<p>SURVIVAL TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES</p> <p>Outline and discuss techniques and strategies for survival situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerations for survival situations • Pre-entry, entry, immersion • Putting on a lifejacket in water • Survival swimming • Group survival strategy • Survival floating • Signalling for help • Removal of clothing in water • Cold water survival/hypothermia 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 59-65 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 1
75 minutes	<p>PRACTICAL POOL SESSION – SURVIVAL SKILLS</p> <p>This practical session should include demonstration and application of the range of survival skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entries and Exits - wade in, slide in, step in, compact jump, dive entry, stride entry, accidental fall-in, deep water exit • Sculling and floating - survival, head first, feet first, treading water, front and back floating, body rotations • Underwater skills - head first/feet first surface diving, swimming underwater • Survival techniques - survival floating, signalling for help, removal of clothing, HELP technique, huddle position 	Lifejackets Clothing (candidates)
15 minutes	<p>SWIMMING STROKES</p> <p>Identify the usefulness of each stroke in survival, rescue, competition and recreation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing a suitable stroke • Advantages and disadvantages of each stroke • Rescue modification of technique 	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 68-81

45 minutes	PRACTICAL POOL SESSION Swim 300 metres (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete award item 13 in accordance to award conditions.	
	Survival Skills (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete award item 12 in accordance to award conditions.	Trousers, long sleeved shirt (candidates)
1 hour	RESUSCITATION AWARENESS (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete award item 2 in accordance to award conditions.	Manikins (where available)
60 minutes	RESCUE TECHNIQUES Explain the steps in a rescue and considerations for pre, during and post rescue. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Steps in a rescue – the four A'sCategories of people in difficulty – non-swimmer, weak swimmer, injured person, unconscious personDeveloping a planPriorities of rescue	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 84-92 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 3
	Outline the non-swimming rescues including WHEN and HOW they are used. <ul style="list-style-type: none">TalkReachThrowWadeRow	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 96-100
50 minutes	PRACTICAL POOL SESSION Throw rescue test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete award item 3 in accordance to award conditions.	Lifejackets
	Throw unweighted rope rescue test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete award item 4 in accordance to award conditions.	Unweighted rope (10 metres)
	Accompanied rescue test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete award item 6 in accordance to award conditions.	Flotation aids – lifejacket, kickboard, rescue tube, rescue ring
45 minutes	RESCUE TECHNIQUES Swimming rescues: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Selecting rescue aidsSwimming approachDefences – defensive, reverse, blockingRecovery of a submerged personSearches – team, individual, deep water, parallel patternIdentify WHEN and explain HOW to perform an accompanied rescue.Identify WHEN and explain HOW to perform a non-contact towIdentify WHEN and explain HOW to perform contact tows – cross chest, head, clothing, double shoulder, double armpit, vice grip, support.Stirrup lift.	Swimming and Lifesaving pages 101-119 Bronze e-Lifesaving Module 3

50 minutes	PRACTICAL POOL SESSION Tow test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete award item 8 in accordance to award conditions. Defensive techniques test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate award item 7 into the rescue. 	Non-rigid rescue aid (e.g. towel, clothing)
	Surface dive test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete award item 9 in accordance to award conditions. 	Non-buoyant object (e.g. dive brick)
	Underwater search test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete award item 10 in accordance to award conditions. 	Deep water
25 minutes	KNOWLEDGE TEST (informal or formal) Theory test (I) Complete the theory test as provided by the trainer/ assessor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete award item 1 in accordance to award conditions. Test may be Written (multiple choice) OR Oral (questioning). 	Theory test papers and pens Spare answer sheets Answer template
60 minutes	PRACTICAL POOL SESSION Rescue and Resuscitation test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete award item 5 in accordance to award conditions. 	Deep water Bystander
	Initiative test (I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete award item 11 in accordance to award conditions. 	Selection of rescue aids - towel, clothing, lifejacket, rescue tube, body board, rescue ring (5 rescue aids are required)
10 minutes	CONCLUSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback to candidates Summarise key points Evaluation from candidates 	

AWARD ITEM

1. Answer questions on:

- safe water practices
- how to survive in the water
- self-preservation in rescues
- recognising an emergency
- assessment before and during a rescue
- priorities for rescue
- treatment for shock
- elementary after care
- getting help
- contacting emergency services
- DRSABCD

MUST SEE

- A knowledge and understanding of the principles of water safety.

ASSESSMENT: Multiple choice/short answer, either oral or written

TEACHING TIPS

1. Ask candidates to read sections in the Swimming and Lifesaving manual prior to practising the practical skills.
2. Ensure there are sufficient questions to cover all topics and to thoroughly test the candidate.
3. Use questioning during learning practical skills to assist with understanding.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Much of the underpinning knowledge required to demonstrate an understanding of the water safety, survival, rescue and emergency care principles will be obtained during learning and practising the lifesaving and rescue skills of the Bronze Star award items.

Safe water practices

Knowledge of dangers and hazards of various aquatic environments and appropriate safety actions is vital to enjoying the water safely. Spending time in and around water requires some preparation and should include:

- Wearing appropriate clothing and footwear
- Sun protection including hat, sunscreen, sunglasses and light, long-sleeved clothing
- Water and non-alcoholic drinks to keep hydrated
- Mobile phone or knowing the nearest location of a phone

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 2, pages 20-37

Survival in the water

Survival in cold water can be increased by:

- Wearing a lifejacket and protective clothing
- Use a flotation aid for support and where possible above the water
- Avoid immersing the head
- Avoid swimming or active movement for long periods as this increases fatigue and heat loss
- Adopt the HELP or huddle technique
- Remain still to conserve energy

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, pages 59-65

Self-preservation

The following order for methods of rescue should be considered to provide the greatest degree of safety for the rescuer:

- Talk
- Reach
- Throw
- Wade
- Row
- Swim
- Non-contact tow
- Contact tow

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 5, page 88

Recognising an emergency

People in difficulty may not always signal for help so it may not be obvious they are in trouble. Early recognition and a quick interpretation of the situation are required. Understanding the types of emergencies that can quickly occur and being able to identify the characteristics of people in difficulty will assist the rescuer in recognising an emergency.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 5, page 84

Assessment before and during a rescue

A quick and correct assessment of an emergency situation is paramount before developing a plan of action. Not taking the time to make an informed judgement may put the rescuer at risk. The time spent will depend on the type of emergency and the urgency required. The following should be assessed:

- Ability of the rescuer including knowledge, skills, fitness and judgement
- Factors at the emergency including number of people, degree of urgency, type of casualty, distance from safety, rescue equipment, environmental and water conditions, availability of bystanders.

Rescuers will need to assess the risk of danger to themselves, prior to commencing a rescue. During a rescue they will need to re-assess the situation, make any adjustments or even stop if they are at risk of danger.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 5, pages 85-87

Priorities for rescue

When more than one person is in difficulty, a good assessment of the type of casualties and the situation will assist in prioritising who to rescue first.

Generally, conscious casualties should be rescued first either by securing or supporting them. Of these, non-swimmers are top priority as they can quickly become unconscious. Distance from safety will need to be considered as those closer to safety could be quickly secured or supported, before rescuing those further out.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 5, page 89

Treatment for shock

Shock can be caused by severe bleeding, burns, fractures, cardiac problems, severe dehydration, diarrhea, vomiting or brain and spinal injuries. Casualties may experience pale, cold, clammy skin, a fast, weak pulse, rapid breathing or shortness of breath, confusion and anxiety, dizziness, nausea or vomiting.

Once emergency services have been contacted, attention must be directed towards treating the causes of shock such as bleeding, fractures or burns. Provide reassurance and handle the casualty carefully. If injuries permit, the casualty should be laid flat and protection provided from extremes of heat or cold. Do not give any food or drink.

Elementary after care

The rescuer should continue to monitor the casualty until medical aid arrives. Make the casualty comfortable or place them in the recovery position.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 8, page 173

Getting help

Bystanders can assist greatly in an emergency situation even if they are untrained in rescue or emergency care. Rescuers should:

- Give clear and precise instructions
- Ask for bystanders to quickly return to provide further assistance

Bystanders can assist in the following ways:

- Telephone emergency services; Police, Ambulance or Fire
- Seek help nearby from a lifeguard
- Locate rescue aids
- Locate defibrillator if required
- Direct emergency services to the rescue location
- Get information from witnesses to the emergency
- Manage crowds

Emergency services

Emergency services should be quickly contacted in the case of drowning casualties. If bystanders are available, the rescuer should direct them to contact emergency services immediately. Bystanders can be used to wait for the arrival of emergency services and direct them to the location of the emergency. If bystanders are not available, rescuers should contact emergency services immediately after assessing the casualty's response but without further endangering the casualty if CPR is required and a phone is not immediately available.

For Police, Fire or Ambulance phone TRIPLE ZERO (000).

112 can be used if mobile phones are out of the coverage area and will work worldwide.

The following information that may be requested from the emergency operator:

- Name and details of rescuer, casualty or any witnesses
- Location of emergency
- Description of what has happened
- How many people involved
- Condition of casualties
- Medical assistance or after care that has been provided

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 5, page 90

DRSABCD

See DRSABCD action plan in Item 2- Resuscitation awareness.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 7, pages 123-148

AWARD ITEM

2. Demonstrate:

- 2.1. checking for dangers
- 2.2. assessing unconsciousness
- 2.3. opening and clearing the airway
- 2.4. checking for breathing
- 2.5. positioning the casualty for CPR
- 2.6. mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing
- 2.7. mouth-to-nose rescue breathing
- 2.8. chest compression
- 2.9. the appropriate action for a casualty who vomits or regurgitates
- 2.10. the appropriate action if an airway blockage is apparent
- 2.11. the recovery position.

Where possible test items 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8 should be performed on a manikin.

MUST SEE

- check for dangers and take appropriate action – identify, remove or eliminate
- squeeze and shout
- send for help
- check airway, clear and open
- check breathing – look, listen and feel
- head tilt/chin lift
- effective simulated mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing
- effective simulated mouth-to-nose rescue breathing
- location of compression point
- correct recovery position with mouth angled downwards for casualty that vomits or regurgitates
- clear casualty's mouth
- correct method of placing casualty in recovery position.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. This test item emphasises awareness of the components of CPR.
2. Using a manikin provides experiences in simulating rescue breathing and chest compressions.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

DRSABCD action plan

D	DANGER	Check for dangers to yourself, bystanders and the casualty.
R	RESPONSE	Check for response – Squeeze shoulders and shout questions: can you hear me? open your eyes, what’s your name?, squeeze both my hands.
S	SEND FOR HELP	Call or ask a bystander to phone Triple Zero (000).
A	AIRWAY	Check, clear and open the casualty’s airway.
B	BREATHING	Look, listen and feel for any signs of normal breathing. If not breathing normally, commence CPR. If breathing, place in the recovery position and continue to monitor.
C	CPR	Give 30 compressions followed by 2 rescue breaths. 100-120 compressions per minute.
D	DEFIBRILATION	If a defibrillator is available, immediately attach the defibrillator and follow the prompts. Note: CPR should be continued until the defibrillator is turned on and the pads attached.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 7, pages 123-148

Resuscitation Guides are available through State and Territory offices.

AWARD ITEM

3. A person is in difficulty 6 metres from safety.

- Effect a throwing rescue using a lifejacket as a buoyant aid.

MUST SEE

- reassurance to the casualty
- clear instruction
- consideration of self-preservation
- effective use of the aid.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. A lifejacket will be easier to throw with the zipper up and the clips fastened.
2. Demonstrate what can happen if self-preservation is not considered.
3. Throw rescues can be practised on dry land before entering the water.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Self-preservation

Self-preservation should always be considered before and during a rescue. Self-preservation is the rescuer putting their personal safety first and not endangering themselves to rescue another person. Some examples of self-preservation may be:

- Not entering the water in order to perform a rescue if a reach or throw rescue could be used.
- Not entering the water if the conditions are unsafe.
- Not attempting a rescue if they do not have the level of ability required.
- Checking for dangers such as live wires, electrical cords, rip currents or submerged objects.

Reassurance and instruction

Providing clear instructions and calming the casualty are vital in any rescue. The rescuer should remain calm and reassure the person that help is on the way. Encourage self-help with positive instructions. When giving the casualty instructions make them simple and direct.

Throw rescue

A throw rescue is a non-contact rescue used when the person in difficulty is too far away to perform a reach rescue. Throwing a buoyant aid to a person in difficulty provides them with support until they can be safely removed from the water.

Where possible, select a buoyant aid that can be easily grasped and is buoyant enough to support a person in difficulty. The aid should be thrown either underarm or overarm depending on the type of aid and the distance to be thrown. Environmental factors such as wind, currents and weight of the aid should be taken into consideration. Aim to throw the aid within arm's reach of the person in difficulty. Instruct the person to grasp the aid to their chest and kick to the point of safety.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, page 97

Securing at a point of safety

Once the casualty has been brought to safety, they should be carefully secured to ensure a further incident does not occur. If unable to exit the water without assistance, the rescuer should place both of the casualty's hands high on the edge and place their hands on top. Ensure the casualty's mouth and nose are clear of the water.

AWARD ITEM

4. A person is in difficulty 10 metres from safety.

- Perform a throwing rescue using an unweighted rope.
- Secure the person at a point of safety.

MUST SEE

- reassurance to the casualty
- clear instruction
- consideration of self-preservation
- effective use of the unweighted rope
- steady haul to safety
- person secured at the point of safety.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Start with teaching the technique of coiling the rope as this is the most difficult and timely part of the rescue.
2. Practise throwing the unweighted rope on dry land using a target for the distance.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Throw rescue

Using a throw rescue enables the rescuer to remain out of the water. A buoyant aid or a rope may be thrown to the person in difficulty. A throw rescue is used when the person in difficulty is too far away to perform a reach rescue.

Learning to throw an unweighted rope is a difficult skill to master straight away but with practise this can be achieved. There are a number of different methods to coil and throw the rope, so experimenting to find the appropriate technique for candidates should be considered.

- The rope should be coiled evenly and steadily to avoid tangling.
- Secure one end of the rope; tie it to a fixed object or place under a foot.
- Aim to throw the rope over the shoulder of the person in difficulty.
- Instruct the person to hold the rope with both hands securely and either lie on their back or front.
- Pull-in steadily using a hand-over-hand technique.
- The rescuer should keep in a low body position to avoid being pulled into the water.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, page 98

AWARD ITEM

5. An unconscious and non-breathing person is floating face-down in deep water. The candidate should:
- 5.1. enter the water and swim to the person
 - 5.2. turn the person over and tow 10 metres to shallow water
 - 5.3. call for assistance
 - 5.4. commence rescue breathing while wading to safety.

The components for the award item must be performed in the sequence listed.

MUST SEE

- check for danger and safe water entry
- effective turning of the person to face-up position
- use of appropriate tow for unconscious casualty
- effective tow for the distance of 10 metres
- clear instructions to bystanders for assistance and to call emergency services
- assessment of respiratory failure
- correct technique for simulated rescue breathing
- wading to safety while providing rescue breathing

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Break each component of the test down into separate skills so candidates are able to concentrate on one skill rather than trying to remember what they need to do next.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Unconscious person

An unconscious person may be found in any position in the water; on the surface, below or at the bottom and could be face-up or face-down. They will be completely limp and immediate rescue is required. They will not be able to cooperate or respond to instruction. A contact tow is required.

Entries

When selecting a safe entry, the following should be considered:

- Assess the area to select the most appropriate method.
- Choose a method that offers complete safety.
- Always consider the depth of water.
- Conditions change, so re-assessment is required.

Methods of entry include:

- Wade in – shallow water, unknown conditions.
- Slide in – unknown depth and conditions.
- Step in – known depth, clear and bottom free from obstacles.
- Compact jump (with and without lifejacket) – known deep water from height > 1 metre.
- Dive entry – known deep water, clear and bottom free from obstacles.
- Stride entry – known deep water, clear and bottom free of obstacles, keep watch of casualty.
- Accidental fall in – unexpected.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, pages 44-48

Swim approach

Speed in reaching an unconscious person is essential because breathing may stop within seconds, if it has not already. Continuous observation is vital in case the person submerges. If a wade entry is required, a wading approach should be used until a suitable point from which to begin the swim. Speed is important but so too is the need to conserve energy to tow the person in difficulty to return to safety. The approach should be done with head up to enable the rescuer to keep observation of the casualty. The defensive position should always be adopted at a safe distance in order to make a final assessment. Even though the casualty is unconscious in this award item, it is good practice to reinforce this step upon all approaches.

Turning an unconscious person who is face-down

To turn over an unconscious person who is face-down:

- Move to a position facing the head.
- Grasp the person's shoulders.
- Rotate the person to a face-up position.

Contact tow

There are various contact tow methods that may be used for rescue of an unconscious person:

- Cross-chest tow – when in rough water conditions.
- Head tow – when a firm hold on the unconscious person's head is required.
- Clothing tow – when conditions are calm and casualty is wearing clothes.
- Double-shoulder tow – when control of body position of casualty is required and rescuer does not have the swimming power to perform a cross-chest tow.
- Double-armpit tow – when a high head elevation is required, suitable for rough water.
- Vice-grip tow – when casualty has suspected spinal injury.
- Support tow – when casualty is unconscious and not breathing.

The following principles can be used to judge an effective contact tow:

- The casualty's mouth is kept above water.
- The casualty and rescuer are as horizontal as possible in the water.
- The rescuer has unrestricted swimming movements.
- The selected tow does not hamper the rescuer's stamina and strength.
- The casualty's head is controlled to keep the airway open.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, pages 109-113

Call for assistance

The rescuer should provide clear and firm instructions to any bystanders on the scene for assistance. Instruct the person to:

- Call for emergency services.
- Find and bring back rescue aids such as a boat, rescue ring or defibrillator.
- Return quickly to direct emergency services and provide assistance to the rescuer.

Rescue breathing in water

During a rescue it may be necessary to perform rescue breathing while still in the water if unable to land the casualty safely. It is not possible to perform chest compressions in water but rescue breathing can be performed successfully. In shallow water, the casualty should be secured and supported by the rescuer's body or legs or use of the edge such as the side of the pool. The principles for resuscitation are similar to those on land. The mouth-to-nose technique should be used.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 7, page 144

AWARD ITEM

6. A person is in difficulty 15 metres from safety. With a flotation aid:
- 6.1. enter the water as for unknown conditions
 - 6.2. wade and swim to the person
 - 6.3. pass the aid to the person
 - 6.4. instruct in the use the aid
 - 6.5. accompany the person to safety
 - 6.6. secure the person at a point of safety.

The components for the award item must be performed in the sequence listed.

MUST SEE

- reassurance to the person in difficulty
- effective instructions
- consideration of self-preservation
- effective and safe entry for the environment
- safe wading and swim approach
- accurate pass/throw of flotation aid
- person accompanied to safety
- person secured at the point of safety.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Use a range of buoyant aids suitable for performing an accompanied rescue that may be available in various water environments.
2. Create a scenario where conditions such as currents or wind may need to be considered when throwing the buoyant aid.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Entry for unknown conditions

When the conditions are unknown including the depth and state of the bottom, a wade in or slide in entry is suitable. Both entries are controlled and safe allowing for the feet to feel for unseen obstacles. An aid such as a stick may be used in a wade entry to test for depth or obstacles. Facing the edge in a slide in entry allows for greater control when lowering the body.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, page 44

Wade approach

When wading towards a person in difficulty always maintain a good distance and provide reassurance. Be aware of changes in the depth of the water, currents, obstacles and the nature of the bottom surface.

Throwing a buoyant aid

A buoyant aid can be thrown out to a person in difficulty to provide them with support until they can be brought to safety either by an accompanied rescue or non-contact tow. Buoyant aids may include a lifejacket, rescue ring, rescue tube or kickboard. Depending on the type of aid and the distance, throw either underarm or overarm and attempt to land the aid within arm's reach. Wind, currents and aid weight should be considered. Instruct the person to hold the aid to their chest.

Accompanied rescue

This method of rescue is used when a person in difficulty is too far from safety to use a reach or throw rescue. A buoyant aid is taken and the rescuer should always maintain a safe distance from the person. Once the aid is thrown to the person and they have taken hold, the rescuer should encourage the person to kick and accompany them to safety, keeping 2-3 metres in front and providing reassurance.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, page 106

Securing at a point of safety

Once the casualty has been brought to safety, they should be carefully secured to ensure a further incident does not occur. If unable to exit the water without assistance, the rescuer should place both of the casualty's hands high on the edge and place their hands on top. Ensure the casualty's mouth and nose are clear of the water.

AWARD ITEM

7. Demonstrate the following:

- 7.1. defensive position
- 7.2. a reverse
- 7.3. a leg block.

MUST SEE

- maintaining a safe distance from a person in difficulty
- correct adoption of defensive position
- rapid reverse with vigorous kicking action
- an effective leg block.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Reinforce the concept of self-preservation regularly so candidates automatically consider their own safety during a rescue.
2. Practise the range of defensive techniques using different scenarios and changing training partners.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Defensive techniques are used to avoid contact with a person in difficulty. A person in difficulty can often be irrational, anxious and their only concern is breathing or getting to safety. They may panic and attempt to lunge at the rescuer, so maintaining a safe distance and using an aid as a barrier are methods to keep the rescuer safe. At all times the rescuer should observe the person in difficulty and avoid contact where possible.

Defensive position

When approaching a casualty or needing to assess or re-assess a situation, a rescuer should always adopt the defensive position:

- Maintain a safe distance; approximately 2- 3 metres away from the casualty.
- Lean slightly backwards, keep one leg tucked and push the other leg forward.
- Scull the hands to maintain the position in the water.

Reverse

If the casualty attempts to lunge towards or grasp the rescuer, the rescuer should use the reverse:

- Tuck legs quickly under the body and push them forward.
- Kick vigorously away from casualty – strong big kicks and use hands and arms to increase acceleration.
- Re-adopt the defensive position to re-assess the situation.

Leg block

If the casualty attempts to lunge suddenly before the rescuer can use a reverse, a leg block is used:

- Adopt a tuck position.
- Place a foot against the casualty's upper chest.
- Push away against the casualty's body.
- Reverse, swim away or submerge if necessary.
- Re-adopt the defensive position to re-assess the situation.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, pages 102-103

AWARD ITEM

8. A weak swimmer is in difficulty in deep water 20 metres from safety. With a non-rigid towing aid selected by the assessor:
- 8.1. enter deep water using a stride entry or compact jump
 - 8.2. swim to the person and adopt a defensive position
 - 8.3. offer the aid to the person and tow to safety
 - 8.4. assist the person out of the water using a stirrup lift.

The components for the award item must be performed in the sequence listed.

MUST SEE

- reassurance to the person in difficulty
- effective instructions
- consideration of self-preservation
- constant observation of the casualty
- stride entry or compact jump
- safe swim approach
- adoption of defensive position
- effective use of a non-rigid aid
- efficient tow to safety
- safe stirrup lift.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Use a range of non-rigid aids suitable for performing a non-contact rescue that may be available in various water environments.
2. Practise both a stride entry and compact jump holding a non-rigid aid. Practise a stirrup lift in both shallow and deep water.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Weak swimmer

A weak swimmer may quickly become tired so immediate rescue is required. They are generally in an inclined position in the water using arms and legs for support. They may be facing a point of safety and attempting to attract attention. They may be able to take clear instructions and the use of an aid in an accompanied or non-contact rescue is suitable.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 5, page 86

Stride entry

A stride entry is used into known deep water free of obstacles from a low height. This technique allows the rescuer to keep observation of a person in difficulty. Step out from a standing position with one leg extended forward and the other backwards. Extend arms sideways and slightly forwards. On entering the water, press down with the arms and scissor the legs to keep the head above the water.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, page 47

Compact jump

A compact jump is used when an entry is required from a height of more than one metre into known deep water. Place one hand over the mouth and nose and the other arm over the top to the opposite shoulder. Step off the edge keeping the body vertical, bring the legs together and keep feet parallel to the surface of the water. Upon entry into the water, tuck or pike the body to slow downward movement. When entering with a non-rigid rescue aid, drape the aid over the shoulders prior to positioning the arms across the body to keep hold of the aid.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, page 45

Carrying a rescue aid

Taking an aid in any swimming rescue is the safest option and allows the rescuer to perform a non-contact tow. When entering the water with an aid keep hold of the aid so it does not get swept away by currents or waves. With a buoyant aid, if there is no attached line hold the aid out in front of the body or between the legs. With a non-rigid aid, these can be carried draped around the neck or shoulders.

Non-contact tow

A non-contact tow is used when an accompanied rescue is not possible or has proven ineffective. Non-contact remains a preferable method than a contact tow which is a greater risk to the rescuer.

Select an appropriate towing aid such as a rescue tube, rescue ring, body board or a non-rigid aid (towel or clothing) and enter the water. Swim to the person and adopt the defensive position. Provide clear instructions. Pass the aid to the person to take hold with two hands, retaining hold of the other end of the aid. The rescuer may try to encourage the person to float on their back which may make it easier to tow for some aids. The rescuer should keep their towing arm straight which increases the distance between the rescuer and the person. While towing using sidestroke or survival backstroke, the rescuer should keep observation for signs of panic. Reassurance and encouragement to assist by kicking should be provided.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, pages 106-107

Stirrup lift

A stirrup lift can be used in shallow or deep water when the casualty is able to help. Allow the casualty to recover sufficiently to be assisted from the water by providing support against the edge. Move to the side or behind the person. In shallow water, the rescuer forms a cup with their hands against their knee for the casualty to lever their body up out of the water. In deep water, the rescuer uses one hand to maintain a firm grip on the edge. With the other hand, form a cup or stirrup and instruct the person to step up or leave the water. If the edge is high and difficult to hold, the rescuer should tread water while providing the stirrup. As the person steps up, the rescuer may go under water.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, page 118

AWARD ITEM

9. Demonstrate a head-first and a feet-first surface dive in deep water. On each occasion collect an object from the bottom.

MUST SEE

- effective head-first surface dive with minimal splash
- effective feet-first surface dive with minimal splash
- searching with hands to find object
- recovery of an object with each dive.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Emphasise the importance of performing head-first and feet-first surface dives with little splash to minimise disturbance.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Head-first surface dive

A head-first surface dive should be used when water conditions are known to be safe. It is used when escaping from danger or when recovering a submerged person.

Swim a freestyle or breaststroke approach towards the point directly above the object to be recovered. Submerge the upper body by bending at the hips and using the arms to drive downwards. Raise the legs to straighten the body into a vertical position. Keep the arms extended to protect the head.

Feet-first surface dive

A feet-first surface dive can be used when searching unclear water and for escaping from under upturned boats. The extended feet-first surface dive is used when a quick submersion is required where as a controlled feet-first surface dive is when a slower and controlled descent is required.

Adopt a vertical position, kick vigorously and push hands downwards to raise the body in the water. Point the toes and swing both arms above the head to drive the body vertically downwards. The hands may scull for further propulsion when under the water. For a more controlled descent, bring the body into a vertical position with legs together and toes pointed. Use the hands in an upward scooping action to propel the body down.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, pages 56-58

Recovery of an object

In water that is not clear, sweep the hands near the bottom to locate an object. Grasp the object and hold to the chest, with bent knees, push off the bottom until the water surface is reached.

AWARD ITEM

10. Demonstrate a search pattern in deep water.

MUST SEE

- effective head-first or feet-first surface dive
- demonstrate a series of surface dives using backing up technique
- searching with hands at the bottom surface
- methodical coverage of area.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Practise search patterns out of the water to learn the backing up technique, maintaining a line, the sweeping of hands and giving clear and loud instructions.
2. Emphasise the importance of performing head-first and feet-first surface dives with little splash to minimise disturbance.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

If the person in difficulty who becomes submerged has been observed by the rescuer, they may be quickly located and recovered. Sometimes the location of a submerged person may be indicated by bubbles. In the case the person in difficulty has not been observed, a search pattern will need to be used to locate the submerged person.

Search patterns

The purpose of search patterns is to recover a person where the location of the person is unknown; these can be performed by an individual or as a group.

A rescuer undertaking an individual search in deep water should use the backing up technique. This ensures the whole area is covered. They start by performing a surface dive and sweeping their hands near to the bottom to feel for any submerged person. Upon surfacing, they back up approximately one metre and repeat the surface dive.

In a group search, they will also use the backing up technique. One person should take the role as the leader to provide instructions. Rescuers should be spaced close enough so they can see each other underwater and their sweeping hands can touch. The search is conducted in parallel lines following the backing up technique. To turn the group, the end person acts as a pivot to ensure the whole search area is covered.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 6, pages 104-105

AWARD ITEM

11. Demonstrate initiative in effecting a rescue of a person in difficulty who is no more than 15 metres from safety.

The assessor will:

- specify whether the person is injured, unconscious or a weak swimmer
- specify the distance the person is from safety
- ensure that three to five rescue aids are available.

On completing this test, the candidate may be asked to explain the reasons for the actions taken.

MUST SEE

- quick and accurate recognition and assessment
- reassurance to the person in difficulty if applicable
- effective instructions if applicable
- consideration of self-preservation
- appropriate choice and use of aids
- actions do not further endanger the casualty
- effective rescue of person to safety
- safely secured and after care provided
- sensible justification of actions.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Introduce initiative tests early so candidates understand the concept of simulation and can develop their judgement skills progressively.
2. Explain to candidates the key things you will observe: remaining calm, provide reassurance, encouraging self-help, clear instructions etc.
3. Reinforce the concept of self-preservation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

An initiative is a simulated emergency situation to which a candidate is tested on their response. An initiative test provides an opportunity to assess a candidate's judgement using a combination of their knowledge, fitness and practical skills.

Initiative tests assist candidates to use all available information, assess its relevance to the emergency situation and make decisions on the best course of action. The candidate will need to decide which casualties to rescue first, what techniques or equipment to use and when to call for assistance from bystanders or emergency services.

Simple initiative tests can be used to start to develop judgement skills progressively. Once candidates have learnt some basic rescue skills such as a reach rescue or a throw rescue, initiative tests can be implemented. These tests force decisions to be made on which rescue method may be most effective in rescuing a training partner simulating a person in difficulty.

Setting up initiatives

The following points should be considered when setting up an initiative:

1. The level of lifesaving skill and knowledge of the candidates.
2. The location and general situation whether actual or imagined.
3. The number of casualties stated in the award item (1 casualty for Bronze Star).
4. The type of casualty: non-swimmer, weak swimmer, injured person or unconscious person, person with suspected spinal injury in shallow water.
5. Location of casualties in the water: distance from safety, caught in a current etc.
6. Changes in casualty status during the rescue.
7. The types, number and location of rescue aids available (3 to 5 aids for Bronze Star).
8. Whether or not there are any bystanders nearby.
9. The skills and knowledge of any bystanders.
10. The boundaries for the initiative.

During the initiative

The following points should be considered during the initiative test:

1. Did the candidate make an adequate assessment of the scenario they were faced with?
2. Did the candidate practise self-preservation prior, during and post rescue?
3. Did the candidate remove any bystanders from danger?
4. Did the candidate utilise any available bystanders effectively with clear instructions?
5. Did the candidate utilise any available rescue aids and were they used effectively?
6. Did the candidate perform the rescues quickly and efficiently?
7. Did the candidate rescue all casualties and provide appropriate after care?
8. Did the candidate recognise injuries and handle appropriately as to not cause further injury?
9. Did the candidate perform CPR if required?
10. Did the candidate contact emergency services as required?

If prompts are required during the initiative, these should be given at the appropriate time to assist with continuing with the rescue. For example: In a scenario where CPR needs to be provided; once the candidate has checked for breathing, the prompt 'not breathing normally' or 'breathing normally' should be given so the candidate can continue with the appropriate action.

After the initiative

To get an understanding of the candidate's judgement skills, the following points may be discussed:

1. Ask the candidate to explain their understanding of the emergency scenario.
2. Ask the candidate to explain the reasoning behind their actions in performing the simulated rescue.
3. Ask the candidate upon reflection, was there anything they may have done differently or they thought they could further improve on.
4. Provide constructive feedback to the candidate on aspects of the rescue that were well executed and areas that required further improvement.

A Lifesaving Initiative Scenarios and Learning Activities booklet is available from Royal Life Saving.

AWARD ITEM

12. Dressed in swimwear, trousers and a long-sleeved shirt:

- 12.1. float using hand sculling movements for 1 minute and then tread water for 1 minute waving intermittently as if signalling for help
- 12.2. put on a lifejacket in deep water and swim 50 metres
- 12.3. demonstrate the HELP position
- 12.4. climb out of the water.

The components for the award item must be performed in the sequence listed.

MUST SEE

- effective floating for 1 minute using hand sculling movement
- effective treading water for 1 minute
- arm extended above head and waving to signal for help
- correct fitting of lifejacket
- distance of 50 metres achieved
- demonstration of correct help position
- climb out of the water safely.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Practise putting on a lifejacket outside the water first, then progress to shallow water before progressing to deep water.
2. Break each component of the test down into separate skills so candidates are able to concentrate on one skill rather than trying to remember what they need to do next.
3. First practise the skills without clothing and once they are competent, add the clothing required for the test.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Personal survival skills are vital in the case a person finds themselves in an emergency situation. Developing a range of skills will aid the candidate in adapting to different conditions in a wide range of aquatic environments. Survival skills such as sculling, body rotation, treading water and eggbeater kick will all assist the individual to keep above water, conserve energy and remain calm.

Sculling

Sculling is an essential skill which all swimming strokes and many survival techniques are based. The position of the hands will determine the direction of movement. Survival sculling is used when it is necessary to stay in the one position and is suitable for warmer water where heat loss is not a problem. The hands should scull in a flat action to maintain a stationary position on the back. For those that are unable to maintain a motionless float, the legs may be kicked slightly to keep the body horizontal.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, pages 50-54

Treading water

Treading water enables a person to stay in the one position with the head of the water. A variety of leg actions may be used but the most effective is the eggbeater kick. Other leg actions that can be used are: breaststroke, flutter kick, scissor kick or a cycling action. The arms use a relaxed sculling action and are kept below the surface.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, page 55

Signal for help

While floating, sculling or treading water, extend one arm above the head with an open hand. Attract attention by waving intermittently and shouting for help.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, page 62

Putting on a lifejacket

A lifejacket should be worn at all times when on water craft. It is important lifejackets are the correct size and fit properly for the person wearing it. Lifejackets come in four different categories depending on the aquatic activity undertaken. They are designed to ensure a person floats with their head out of water, even if unconscious. Although a person may be a confident swimmer, in the situation where they could become unconscious, wearing a lifejacket may save their life.

In the case a lifejacket is not worn prior to entry into the water, the following technique can be used:

- Place the lifejacket flat on the water surface with the collar away from the body and the inner lining facing upwards.
- Put an arm into one arm hole and lean back into the lifejacket.
- Place the other arm into the arm hole.
- Remain lying on the back to zip, buckle or tie the lifejacket.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, page 63

HELP technique

The Heat Escape Lessening Posture (HELP) may help to lengthen the time that a person can survive in the water by protecting the areas of the body that are prone to losing heat quickly. These areas are the head, sides of the chest and groin. To perform the HELP technique a lifejacket should be worn if available. Draw the knees to the chest, hold the lifejacket collar with both arms pressed to the sides of the chest and minimise movement as the key to survival is to conserve energy.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 3, page 64

Exit the water wearing a lifejacket

Exiting the water wearing a lifejacket can be a little more difficult but the technique is more or less the same. With both hands on the edge, kick legs vigorously to raise the body as high as possible. Lean forward and place a knee over the edge to climb out.

AWARD ITEM

13. Dressed in swimwear, swim continuously 300 metres:

- 13.1. 100 metres freestyle
- 13.2. 100 metres sidestroke
- 13.3. 100 metres breaststroke

The target time for the swim is 10 minutes.

MUST SEE

- continuous swim
- distance achieved
- recognised freestyle
- survival strokes must be performed with underwater arm recovery and any effective leg action is permissible.

ASSESSMENT: Practical demonstration of skills

TEACHING TIPS

1. Initially test at the start to ascertain whether candidates have the swimming ability to undertake the award.
2. Provide opportunities to practise the strokes to develop technique and fitness.
3. Encourage candidates to practise the swim outside of class time particularly if they are struggling to achieve the distance or target time.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Swimming strokes may be used for survival, rescue, competition and recreation. Speed of stroke, energy expenditure, propulsion and vision are all important factors in selecting an appropriate stroke for the water conditions and situation.

Stroke	Survival	Rescue	Competition	Recreation
Freestyle	•	•	•	•
Backstroke	•		•	•
Breaststroke	•	•	•	•
Butterfly			•	
Sidestroke	•	•	•	•
Survival Backstroke	•	•	•	•

Freestyle

Advantages

- Fastest stroke for approaching a person in difficulty or escaping from danger.
- Allows unrestricted vision when swum with the head above the water.

Disadvantages

- May be tiring due to the above-water arm recovery.

Rescue Modification

- Swim with the head above the water looking forwards to watch the person in difficulty.
- Provide instructions and reassurance upon approach.
- A buoyant aid may be carried over the shoulder, held between the legs or kept between the arms whilst swimming.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 4, page 69

Survival Backstroke

Advantages

- Effective in rescue and survival where endurance is required.
- Useful for towing especially when two hands are required to hold a person in difficulty.
- Observation and constant reassurance can be given to the person in difficulty.
- It can be performed with a variety of kicks such as breaststroke or eggbeater.

Disadvantages

- The swimmer has no view in the direction of travel.
- Survival backstroke is relatively slow.

Rescue Modification

- The strong leg action is used for propulsion whilst holding a person or persons and a flotation device to tow in to safety.
- The kick is underneath the casualty's body without being hindered.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 4, page 79

Sidestroke

Advantages

- Relatively simple to perform and requires low energy output.
- Strong propulsion from leg action for towing.
- Breathing is not interrupted.
- Vision can be ahead and behind.

Disadvantages

- It is a slow stroke.
- Increased resistance when the head is held out of the water.

Rescue Modification

- The head should be above the water and turned either way to aid observation.
- When towing, increase propulsion of lower arm by pulling all the way to hipline.
- An aid may be held with one arm while using the other for propulsion.
- The upper arm is used to tow a casualty while the lower arm provides propulsion with the leg action.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 4, page 77

Breaststroke

Advantages

- The stroke adapts well to swimming underwater.
- Allows for uninterrupted breathing and unrestricted forward vision when the head is above the water.
- The head can be turned to the side away from wind and waves.
- The glide or resting phase allows for the conservation of energy.
- Observation and constant reassurance can be given to the person in difficulty.

Disadvantages

- It is a slow stroke.
- Increased resistance occurs when the head is held above the water.

Rescue Modification

- The glide or resting phase may be longer when used as a rescue or survival stroke in order to conserve energy.
- The head is kept above the water to allow regular breathing.
- An aid may be held with the arms whilst the kicking action propels the body.
- Hand and feet speed may be slowed to conserve energy.

Ref: Swimming and Lifesaving Chapter 4, page 79



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