



MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITIES RALLY TOGETHER TO SUPPORT LOCAL SURF CLUBS AS SUMMER SEASON KICKS OFF

BP'S 'VOTE THE BOAT' IS BACK!

11 November 2020: As the 2020 surf season kicks off, bp's 'Vote the Boat' is back for its third year running of public voting which sees local communities rally together in support of their local Surf Life Saving NZ (SLSNZ) club.

For two weeks until Sunday 22 November, New Zealanders are invited to ['Vote the Boat'](#) daily to decide which of the four Surf Life Saving NZ (SLSNZ) club finalists is most deserving of the \$25,000 worth of life-saving equipment, a brand new Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) donated by bp.

Surf Life Saving New Zealand is an integral part of every Kiwi summer and clubs across the country are bracing themselves for keeping Kiwis safe during what could be the busiest lifesaving season on record.

The four Surf Life Saving NZ clubs in the running to win this year's bp IRB donation are:

- Levin-Waitarere Surf Life Saving Club; Manawatu-Wanganui
- Riversdale Surf Life Saving Club; Wairarapa
- New Brighton Surf Life Saving Club; Christchurch
- North Beach Surf Life Saving Club; Christchurch

There was a comprehensive application process where SLSNZ clubs submitted a written entry along with a one-minute video. The four finalist clubs now have their videos and entries on the Vote the Boat website. The club that receives the most votes will win the \$25,000 worth of rescue equipment donated by bp as part of its annual contribution to SLSNZ.

Kiwis are encouraged to visit the Vote the Boat website daily to vote on which club they think should take home the grand prize, which includes a brand-new IRB. One vote can be cast online per day.

IRBs have played an important role in facilitating 23,968 rescues since their introduction. This makes up a significant portion of the almost 57,000 lives that have been saved since the start of the partnership between bp and Surf Life Saving New Zealand 52 years ago.

Surf Life Saving New Zealand CEO Paul Dalton says, "Our Surf Lifeguards do an extraordinary job – they conduct hundreds of rescues and perform thousands of preventative actions on our beaches every year and IRBs are a vital piece of equipment for them. For some clubs,



upgrading or purchasing one of their own is financially very challenging. We're beyond grateful to have been offered the bp Vote the Boat opportunity again. It gives us a chance to showcase the hard work that our lifeguards do for their communities each year and we're excited to see which club takes home the IRB."

Debi Boffa, Managing Director of bp New Zealand says, "We are thrilled to run Vote the Boat for another year. Without the hard work of Surf Life Saving clubs around the country year in and year out, we wouldn't be able to enjoy our beautiful beaches safely. We have received incredible submissions from local clubs across the country and now we want Kiwis to have their say on which club is most deserving of a new Inflatable Rescue Boat for their community."

bp has partnered with Surf Life Saving New Zealand for 52 years and is 'In It For Life'. bp's partnership with Surf Life Saving New Zealand includes an annual donation, a new Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) donated to one club each year (valued at \$25,000), and an annual contribution towards fuel costs for every Surf Life Saving club around the country. To find out more about the regional finalists, watch the videos, and to cast your vote, visit www.VotetheBoat.co.nz

- Ends -

For further information contact: Courtney Stayte | Account Director | Porter Novelli for bp New Zealand | Phone: 020 4078 7876 | Email: courtney.stayte@porternovelli.kiwi

About the 52-year bp and Surf Life Saving New Zealand partnership:

The partnership between bp and SLSNZ began shortly after the 1968 Wahine disaster with the donation of a surf boat. Prior to that, bp's predecessor, Europa, sponsored a surf boat at Worser Bay Surf Life Saving Club called 'Miss Europa'. This boat was used by brave clubbies in horrendous conditions to save some of the 683 passengers and crew that were rescued from the Wahine. The Europa staff were so impressed by the actions of these clubbies that a nationwide sponsorship began evolving into the celebrated partnership it is today. bp purchased Europa and continued the partnership.

bp's partnership with Surf Life Saving New Zealand includes an annual donation, a new Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) donated to one club each year (valued at \$25,000), and an annual contribution towards fuel costs for every Surf Life Saving club around the country. bp has also launched the bpLeaders for Life programme which is designed to provide lifeguards with a variety of important skills including conflict resolution and leadership skills that can be taken back and applied to their communities and clubs. bp recognises the skills of surf lifeguards in the bp Rescue of the Month and bp Rescue of the Year awards.



In addition to Vote the Boat, bp has run Every Litre Counts in recent years, a month-long initiative which sees a portion of every litre of fuel sold at bp sites nationwide donated to the charity. Since it began, \$908,670 has been raised through Every Litre Counts, in addition to bp's other support of Surf Life Saving New Zealand.