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SEPTEMBER— 2025
Quarterly newsletter

BOAT TALK

SANDGATE



Welcome SWAC

During the negotiation process for Voluntary Marine Rescue Brisbane Inc. (VMRB) to transition to Marine Rescue Queensland - Sandgate, the former VMRB members were entirely focused on the community.

They place great value in their role not only as a water response rescue unit but as an anchor for the community to come together.

To preserve this community legacy outside of their water rescue function, they negotiated VMRB trade as Sandgate Water Activities Club (SWAC) to ensure the facilities and the opportunities that come with that continue to serve the community.

SWAC will run as a not-for-profit organisation and will build from the legacy left by the members of VMRB, many of whom also continue to volunteer and support SWAC to grow and succeed.





Unit Commander Update

WE MADE IT! Transition day came and went with only minimal distractions to our day to day rescue related activities. Behind the scenes there has been a constant flurry of activity. Not the least being rebranding, completing the asset transfer, and implementing an array of new/ different operational processes. Special thanks to all those involved including Garry Maher, Richard Jones, Cameron Pegler and Thomas Grice.

We are going to implement a holistic, bi-annual crew recruitment program. The first recruitment will commence in early October with the goal of having new crew appointed by the end of November. This timing considers the new MRQ recruitment and approval processes. New crew members will participate in a three rostered crew day rotation with final crew appointment completed by the end of the year.

We have uplifted our training program with passionate volunteers taking the lead. Our training plan focuses on upskilling existing crew members that are in line to complete Competent Crew rank and onboarding new crew. At the moment we have limited Assessor capacity to assist others wanting to progress beyond Competent Crew through to Coxswain but we are working on this.

All crew have now or are in the process of updating their new email address to reflect MRQ and now looks like x.x@mrq.qld.org.au

If you need any information please visit our website at [Home | Marine Rescue Queensland](#).

The date for our post transition celebration day has moved to the afternoon of 2 November so please update your calendar's and come on down to celebrate this milestone with us.

Neil Sheppard

Unit Commander - MRQ Sandgate
Marine Rescue Queensland

VMR BRISBANE INC. HAS NOW BEEN REBRANDED



MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND

Quebec crew on the water

One the last VMR Brisbane crew day ahead of becoming a Marine Rescue Queensland Unit we started with a navigation exercise around Flinders Reef, north of Moreton Island, combined with our open water hours accrual.

On route we came across a large turtle which had unfortunately died. Such is the circle of life.

As we approached the north of Moreton Island we were treated by whales breaching and fins slapping.

On our return we got a call to attend 4.2m tinnie which had broken down 2.5 nautical miles north of Moreton requiring assistance.

The tinnie with two persons on board (PoB) needed a tow to the Port of Brisbane boat ramp at Whyte Island.

Then back to base to refuel and wash down Sands Rescue 1.



Images: James Maskell

REFUELING AT BASE





Image left to right: Bismar Asif Labour Member for Sandgate Shadow Assistant Minister for Multiculturalism and Citizenship, Shadow Assistant Minister for the Environment, Marcus Edgar, Matt Bulgar, Thomas Grice, David Massim and Jared Cassidy Councillor for Deagon Ward since 2015.

VMRB 2024-2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Volunteer Marine Rescue Brisbane Inc was 30 September 2025.

We thank our local members who have supported us and continue to support Marine Rescue Queensland Sandgate and the newly created Sandgate Water Activities Club (SWAC). Both entities coexist as part of the transition to Marine Rescue Queensland.

SWAC has been developed to continue the primary service to the community of the former Volunteer Marine Rescue Brisbane Inc. we will do this in many different ways that will evolve as we develop. The water rescue function is now transitioned as Marine Rescue Queensland Sandgate.

RECOGNITION

We would like to celebrate Richard Jones and Thomas Grice who received well-earned recognition for their contributions and efforts.

Richard Jones is the VMRB 2024-25 Club Person of the Year for his tireless dedication as Treasurer and his great effort to see the best outcomes for the transition to MRQ.

Thomas Grice was awarded Life Member for his commitment to VRMB for over 11 years as President and his huge role in bringing a new generation into the squadron.



Thomas Grice, Outgoing President committee representative — SWAC



Richard Jones, Treasurer MRQ Sandgate and SWAC support treasurer.



President Report

SANDGATE WATER ACTIVITIES CLUB

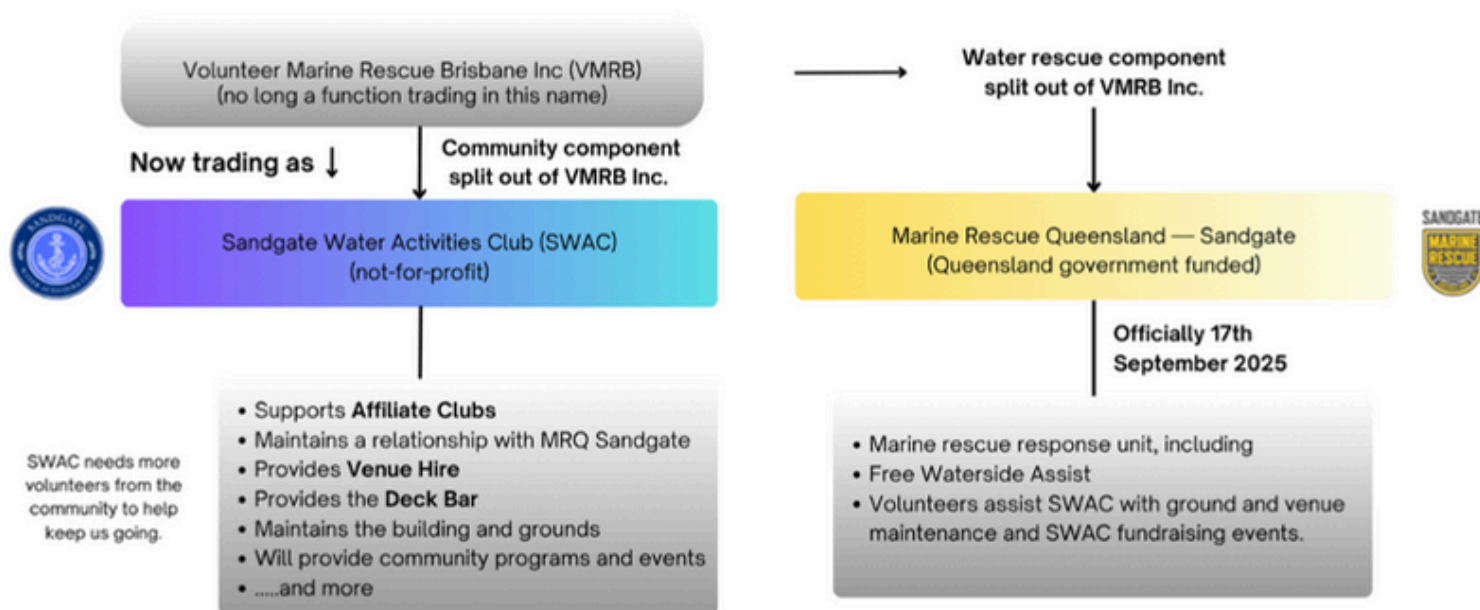


Hello and welcome to Sandgate Water Activities Club (SWAC),

There are changes afoot that are unusual and confusing which is why we don't want to make fast changes. A number of wonderful MRQ - Sandgate volunteers (former VMRB) are continuing to manage the responsibilities that now fall under SWACs constitution. We have also established a committee and will share more with you as we get up and running.

What's happened? The former Volunteer Marine Rescue Brisbane Inc. has been split into the not-for-profit Sandgate Water Activities Club (SWAC), to continue with the community centric function. The water rescue function of VMRB has been transitioned to Marine Rescue Queensland - Sandgate (Queensland Government funded) and operating with the same volunteers.

You will still see the name VMRB Inc. here and there because SWAC is going slowly with the rebrand from VMRB to SWAC.



If you have an interest in joining this exciting adventure and have the skills that can help us grow into an even more valuable asset for the community, please consider joining our leadership team or management support roles. Committee positions available include Vice President, Treasury (support) and Secretary (support). Volunteer committee role descriptions available [HERE](#).

If you would like to volunteer, please send me an email at President@SWAC.org.au

Thank you for your support as we work to build up this amazing community service for you.



Nicole O'Sheehan, President
Sandgate Water Activities Club (SWAC)

SANDGATE PADDLING CLUB

BY SUSAN DOEL



We held the first Basic Skills course of the season. We ask all new paddlers and those needing a refresher to complete the course before getting on the water with the club.

The course is part of the Paddle Australia Awards program and covers all the basic skills required to be competent to go out with the club on a supported paddle.

Eight enthusiastic participants were kitted out with a kayak, paddle and Personal Flotation Device (PFD) with plenty of experienced paddlers on hand to support. We paddled down Yundah Creek practicing and learning paddle skills, sweep strokes, stern rudder skills, draw strokes, emergency stop, rafting - while enjoying the water.

The flora and fauna up mangrove creek, was new to our first time paddlers, with egrets and herons.



WET EXIT SAFETY

After an hour and a half on the water we headed back to Yundah Street boat ramp for the final part of the course – the wet exit and swim. This might not be the most enjoyable part of the course but it is a safety requirement. Paddlers are asked to fall out of their kayak and then swim with it 25m to the boat ramp.

This gives paddlers the skills and confidence to know what to do in an emergency situation. Then back to the club shed to wash up the equipment. Our new paddlers will be supported on follow-up paddles for as long as they need – after that they are free to join in all the other activities of the club.

Images: Susan Doel



POLYNESIAN VA'A-ALO OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB

Well done to our club for making our 10th anniversary memorable. The collective effort to make today special was evident in the group effort in getting us all on the water and the incredible feast after our paddle. Just loved seeing the family and friends laughing and hugging and generally sharing the joy of the day. Our flotilla was nothing short of awe inspiring - we had people on Shorncliffe beach taking photos and asking us about our club. Thank you to the committee for organising this, which we appreciate takes time and special effort in your busy lives. Thank you to all clubbies for your delicious contributions to the amazing feast table and it is not a true Poly Va'a get together without a ukulele jamming session adding a beautiful finishing touch to a special day. Thank you everyone.

Estelle Carnes
PVOCC Head Coach

Get Canoeing



WHAT'S ON

At 95 Allpass Parade Shorncliffe

SWAC FACEBOOK

(rebranding FROM VMRB Inc. soon)

Keep up to date with local community news and events at our Sandgate Water Activities Club (SWAC) Facebook page. [CLICK HERE](#)



MRQ CITATION

Sunday 2 November

Marine Rescue QLD is hosting a special citation ceremony to officially welcome Sandgate squadron members into the MRQ family. Family, friends, and local community members are welcome to come and celebrate this milestone and thank volunteers for their ongoing commitment to saving lives at sea.

MRQ citations are awarded to recognise their role in the establishment of Queensland's first state-wide volunteer marine rescue service and recognises their dedication and ongoing service to their communities.



HALLOWEEN KARAOKE

Friday 31 October at the Deck Bar.

The Deck Bar is hosting a special spooky free event just for fun. Come and dress up, sing, dance or just chill by the bay with a bevie. The choice is yours. Prizes to be won.

Join in on the community spirit which raises funds for Sandgate Water Activities Club (SWAC) (formerly VRMB Inc).

FOOD TRUCK

Friday 7 November

BBQ Roadshow Low'n'Slow food truck - Gluten/dairy-free options available on request.



TWILIGHT BY THE BAY

Friday 5 December

Chill music and bay breezes. Bring a picnic, blanket and some mates and family. We're planning on getting some Sunny Street cheese platters for you too.



CAROLS KARAOKE

Friday 19 December

The Deck Bar are putting on a free community friendly event — Carols Karaoke!



Kedron Wavell and the Sands

At Kedron-Wavell and The Sands, we're more than just a club - we're a proud community hub dedicated to making a difference.

Through partnerships with local organisations, charities and sporting groups, we provide support, sponsorships and funding that help strengthen our community. From grassroots initiatives to large-scale projects, we're committed to giving back and creating meaningful connections.

By being a member of Kedron-Wavell, The Sands Social and The Sands Bowlo, you've unlocked a whole lot M.O.R.E. ways to enjoy your Clubs. Our M.O.R.E Program is designed to recognise your loyalty and give you M.O.R.E. of what you love.

By using your member's card throughout our three Clubs, you will earn M.O.R.E. points, access instant rewards and discounts, enter special promotions and MORE.

Earn 1 M.O.R.E point for every \$1 spent at our restaurants and bars, the Kedron-Wavell Bottle Shop, live shows tickets and barefoot bowls at The Sands Bowlo. Just make sure to present your member's card when purchasing.

[Click here to visit Kedron-Wavell](#)



The Sands Social is your local entertainment venue. Featuring a restaurant, lounge, sports bar, gaming room and tab, children's room, and generous function space. It is open seven days a week from 10.00 am to midnight.

Our restaurant's name, Songbirds, pays homage to the Sandgate area. We offer casual dining with a great selection of meals, including daily specials available for lunch and dinner.

We offer private events in our Bunpin Lounge & Bar or an allocated area in Songbirds Restaurant and Café.

The Bunpin Lounge & Bar has its own private bar and facilities and own entrance. Located on the ground floor, it hosts up to 80 people cocktail style

[Click here to visit Sands Social](#)



There's so much on offer at the Sands Bowlo. Including entertainment | Fitness classes | Functions | Festivals | Line Dancing Bingo | Paint and Pour.

[Click here to visit The Sands Bowlo](#)

Visit each venues website for restaurant and event times.