

Lifesaving Volunteers to the Rescue

Pre-Tour Questions

Setting the Scene – Aquatic Environments:

- Do you go to the beach often (or another aquatic environment, like a lake, river or public pool)? Which one do you visit most often? Is it a patrolled location?
- Have you ever seen the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter? What do you think is the job of the helicopter and its crew?
- In an emergency, who might help you?
- If a friend was planning a visit to an aquatic environment (beach, lake, river or public pool), what safety tips could you give them?

Setting the Scene - Volunteering:

- What is a volunteer?
- Why do we need volunteers?
- Who can be a volunteer?
- What personal attributes does it require to be a volunteer?
- What special skills might be required to be a volunteer?
- Where might we see volunteers in our local community?

Discussion Q&A

Please use this as a guide for leading discussions throughout the tour. Each 'scene' is one of the 360° panorama photos.

Scene 1

No questions

Scene 2

Beginner Question: Why do all crew members wear special flight helmets?

Beginner Answer: Helicopters can be very loud so the helmets allow the crew to communicate with each other as well as providing protection for their head, eyes and ears.

Intermediate Question: Why is Hayden not wearing all of his rescue equipment?

Intermediate Answer: He is not wearing all of his rescue equipment yet because he still needs to communicate with the dispatcher and the pilot during the flight, and also has not determined what equipment he will need for the rescue

Advanced Question: Why will the rescue swimmer and the dispatcher wait until they get to the rescue location before they decide on what rescue method they will use?

Advanced Answer: No two rescues are ever exactly the same. The weather, ocean currents and the location of the rescue will determine how a rescue will unfold and so a lot of decisions have to be made on scene.

Scene 3

Beginner Question: What potential hazards can you see in the water?

Beginner Answer: Shallow water and rocks/reef sticking out above the water

Intermediate Question: How can you spot a rip current?

Intermediate Answer: The things to look for are deeper, dark-coloured water; fewer breaking waves; a rippled surface surrounded by smooth waters; and anything floating out to sea or foamy, discoloured, sandy, water flowing out beyond the waves

Advanced Question: What should you do if you get caught in a rip current?

Advanced Answer: Raise an arm and call out to seek help, float with the current, or swim parallel to the beach. If what you're doing isn't working, try another option until you return to shore.

Scene 4

Beginner Question: Why should you wear a life jacket when rock fishing?

Beginner Answer: You may slip, or be washed into the water by waves. The lifejacket will assist you to float and tread water until help arrives.

Intermediate Question: Even if it is a clear, sunny day, why should you check the weather before going to the beach to swim, rock fish, surf or kayak?

Intermediate Answer: The weather conditions may change throughout the day and it is important to be aware of the size and time of the ocean tides, the wind direction and for any potential storms.

Advanced Question: Why do you think the survivor's legs are secured under the knees with the rescue strop?

Advanced Answer: Raising the survivor's legs up close to their body will help with the survivor's circulation and aims to keep as warm as possible. If they have been in the water for a long time, there is a high chance that they may be suffering from hypothermia.

Scene 5

Beginner Question: What is the best way to avoid a rip current?

Beginner Answer: The best way to avoid a rip is to swim at a patrolled beach between the red and yellow flags.

Intermediate Question: What should you do if you get caught in a rip current?

Intermediate Answer: Raise an arm and call out to seek help, float with the current, or swim parallel to the beach. If what you're doing isn't working, try another option until you return to shore.

Advanced Question: What should you do if you see someone that you think is caught in a rip current?

Advanced Answer: Do not enter the rip current. If the beach is patrolled, inform the lifesavers on duty, otherwise call for help (Triple Zero 000).

Scene 6

Beginner Question: How many rescue missions has the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service completed Australia wide since it was first established in 1973?

Beginner Answer: The Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service has completed over 80,000 rescues.

Intermediate Question: Why do you think the helicopter is restocked and checked over at the end of a mission instead of the start?

Intermediate Answer: If the rescue crew get a call out they will need to leave the base as fast as possible (within 15-minutes). Preparing as much as they can beforehand will help them to leave faster.

Advanced Question: Why is it important that the helicopter is washed thoroughly after a rescue mission over the ocean?

Advanced Answer: Salt water from the ocean may damage the helicopter by causing things to rust and seize up if they are not properly cleaned.

Scene 7

Beginner Question: Do you think it is important to debrief after a mission? Why/Why not?

Beginner Answer: Answers will vary.

Intermediate Question: Hayden spends lots of his spare time volunteering. What activities could you become a volunteer for in your local community?

Intermediate Answer: Answers will vary.

Advanced Question: Why do you think people become volunteers?

Advanced Answer: Answers will vary.

Post-Tour Questions

- Do you know someone who is a volunteer?
- Where do they volunteer
- What do they do?
- Interview them – Write 5 questions to ask them. Write a short story about the volunteer you know.
- Alternatively, if you do not know a volunteer, write a short story about where you would like to volunteer.