

2025

# DOSSIER DE PRESSE

## LES SAUVETEURS EN MER



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**SNSM - Les Sauveteurs en Mer** | Association Loi 1901 - reconnue d'utilité publique par décret du 30 avril 1970

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SEA RESCUERS – PRESS KIT 2025

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# I. THE SEA RESCUERS ASSOCIATION

## I.1 MORE THAN 150 YEARS OF HISTORY

Until the 19th century, sea rescue was often a reality with a tragic outcome, marked by a lack of technical, human and financial resources. Its operation lacked an efficient organization that could cover the entire French coastline.

With the increase in the practice of sea bathing, many rescue societies were formed, then succeeded from 1820. In 1833, the international emotion triggered by the [sinking of the \*Amphitrite\*](#) promotes the construction of the **first real lifeboat**.

Awareness of the need to unify these rescue organizations quickly became apparent. It was not until February 2, 1861 that the Minister of Agriculture, Commerce and Public Works, **Eugène Rouher**, initiated a joint commission to " *search for the most appropriate measures to ensure a complete rescue service on the coast* ." This commission proposed the creation of a private company to unify the existing rescue companies. In 1865, the **Société centrale de secours des naufragés (SCSN)**, chaired by Admiral Charles Rigault de Genouilly, was born.

In 1873, Henri Nadault de Buffon founded a mutual aid society for the families of rescuers, called **Hospitaliers Sauveteurs Bretons (HSB)**. Despite their limited resources, the HSB, very close to the inhabitants, aroused a strong capital of sympathy and their memory in Brittany remains strong even today.

Even at that time, both companies survived thanks to donations and legacies.

In 1889, **Commander Coignera** chaired the HSB company and expanded its sea rescue activities.

First aid boxes and buoys are placed on the beaches, which she has old fishermen watch over. The number of boats and first aid stations is increasing.

At the end of the Second World War, everything had to be rebuilt. In 1949, the HSB developed training for rescuers and set up rescue teams. In 1958, **Paul Renault**, then president, decided to adapt the HSB's rescue and first aid resources to the requirements of modern times. He encouraged the arrival of speedboats, inflatable boats and light motorboats.

At the same time, maritime professions are taking off again and water-based leisure activities are expanding. The **Central Society for the Rescue of Shipwrecked People (SCSN)** and the **Breton Hospital Rescuers (HSB)**, whose objectives are similar, can no longer effectively meet the needs across the entire French coastline. It becomes essential to **bring these two structures together**.

In 1967, at the request of the public authorities, a new company was created, under the provisional name of **National Society for the Safeguarding of Human Life and the Rescue of Shipwrecked Persons at Sea and on the Coast**, which a few months later took the name SNSM: **National Society for Sea Rescue**.  
**Admiral Amman** is the first president of the brand new SNSM.

Created in the form of an association under the 1901 law, its mission is to voluntarily and free of charge rescue human lives in danger at sea and on the French coasts, including in the overseas territories.

**The SNSM was recognized as being of public utility by decree on April 30, 1970.**

In 2017, the year of the association's fiftieth anniversary, the Prime Minister awarded sea rescue the **label of Major National Cause** and instituted the first **National Sea Rescue Days**. These take place every year on the last weekend of June. They help to raise awareness of the association, convey prevention messages ahead of the summer season, collect new resources and unite volunteers around an annual national event.

## I.2 THE MISSIONS OF THE SNSM

The SNSM's mission is to rescue anyone in danger at sea and on the coasts, in mainland France and overseas. **It is the only structure that has the skills and qualifications necessary to intervene jointly from the beach to the open sea.**

It relies on **11,000 volunteers, serving sea rescue**. In 2023, through **9,256 interventions**,  
The on-board rescuers and the SNSM lifeguards took charge of **nearly 30,000 people**, from rescue to care, including searching for children lost on the beaches.

***RESCUE, TRAIN, PREVENT are the three main missions of the SNSM.***



### SAVE LIVES

The SNSM operates from the beach to the open sea:

- **Offshore rescue** is provided by on-board rescuers;
- **Beach surveillance and civil security missions** are carried out by lifeguards.



### TRAIN TO SAVE

745 volunteer trainers train rescuers at the National Training Center (PNF) in Saint-Nazaire and in the 32 training and intervention centers (CFI) based throughout France.

Within the rescue stations, training is placed under the responsibility of the skipper of the boat and is carried out both through mentoring with veterans and by educational and training managers from the PNF and the

nearby stations.

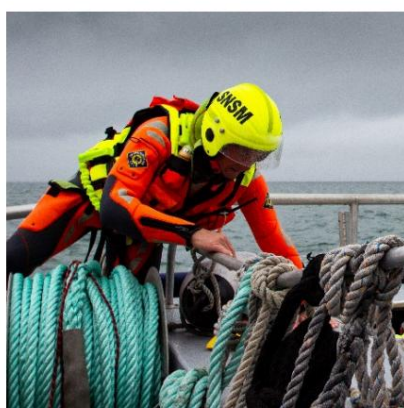


### PREVENTING RISKS AND RAISE AWARENESS

Carry out prevention with  
The general public is informed about the risks at sea and the common sense measures to adopt are an integral part of the SNSM's missions.

This commitment translates into direct interventions  
among all sea users and through the regular distribution of prevention materials.

Sea Rescuers  
also carry out emergency planning arrangements (*see IV.2 – Emergency planning arrangements p. 21*).



© Antoine Dreit - © Pascal Sotin - © Maxime Huriez

### **I.3 THE CHALLENGES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

In 2020, the SNSM Board of Directors launched a project called Cap 2030. This approach is a continuation of Cap 2010, which focused on modernizing technical equipment, informing the association and setting up training for volunteers.

If the SNSM has gained in efficiency and professionalism, the objective for 2030 is to involve volunteers in the development of the association while continuing the work undertaken on the modernization of collective and individual equipment and on training.

#### **The safety of volunteers and the sustainability of their commitment**

Historically, the Sea Rescuers were, for the most part, retired people from maritime professions, mainly rescuing fishermen in difficulty at sea. Today, the SNSM is seeing **younger volunteers, mostly active and from all socio-professional backgrounds, take up the task.**

The beneficiaries of their interventions are now mainly boaters, water sports enthusiasts and holidaymakers, who, in their millions, visit the coast and beaches every summer.

At the same time, the association is faced with **significant challenges concerning the safety of rescuers and the sustainability of the volunteer model** : training of rescuers, development of safety equipment, strengthening of support for local volunteer structures, modernization and renewal of the rescue fleet.



© Pierre Paoli

#### **A necessary modernization**

To meet these challenges, the SNSM has evolved its organization and practices:

- Lifeguards are now equipped with even more modern **individual safety equipment** and efficient;
- A **new rescue fleet**, with the launch of the first series of a range of boats, which meets the safety and efficiency requirements of tomorrow's rescuers, is being created (*see II.5 – The fleet p.13*) ;

The SNSM must have a modern and perfectly maintained rescue fleet. Its forty or so offshore vessels must be replaced. A total of 140 units will need to be renewed in the coming years. Similarly, the infrastructure (boat shelters, training centres, rescue stations) must be modernised;

- The organization of technical support for the fleet has been redesigned, with the implementation of a computerized monitoring system. **The reference documents and training courses have been structured.** The internal qualifications provided by the SNSM are now approved and recognized as professional training;
- The **mobilization of the public**, which benefits from this free personal assistance service, provided by volunteers, must be strengthened. The SNSM needs everyone's support to perpetuate its volunteer model and continue to accomplish a quality mission in the service of the public.



The collection

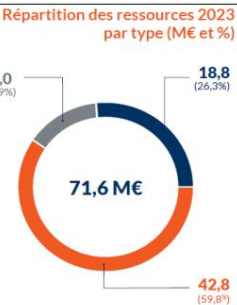
The SNSM budget is based on nearly 60% of the collection from individuals and patrons. Making a donation to the SNSM means participating in the acquisition and maintenance of the rescue fleet and infrastructure, the training of rescuers or the purchase of their equipment and materials.

1.4 BUDGETS AND FINANCING (2023 figures)

Financial resources

The SNSM's resources increased by 12% to reach **71.6 million euros** (excluding the valuation of volunteer work).

**73.6% of resources come from private funds** (42.8% from public generosity, 10% from various services (towing, emergency relief arrangements, scattering of ashes, etc.). The remaining 18.8% comes from public subsidies.

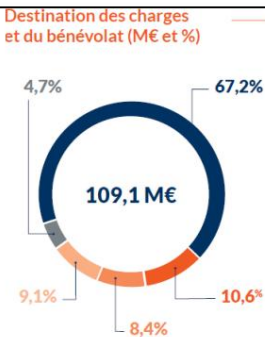


Générosité du public    Autres produits non liés à la générosité du public    Concours publics

Charges and volunteering

In 2023, SNSM expenditure amounts to **109.1 million euros** and takes into account social missions, fundraising costs and operating costs.

Expenditure allocated to social missions represents 72.5% of total expenses and **86.2% when including the recognition of voluntary commitment.**



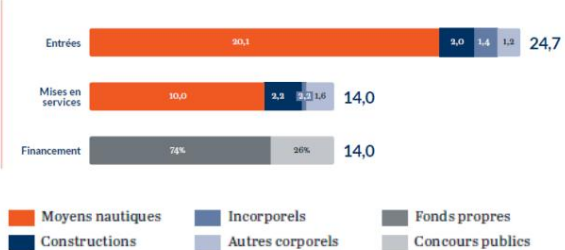
Sauvetage au large    Sauvetage littoral    Sécurité civile et prévention    Recherches de fonds    Fonctionnement

Capital expenditure

Investment expenditure amounts to **24.7 million euros**. More than 20 million euros are devoted to the fleet. The remainder is devoted to major infrastructure, and other vehicles or equipment.

In the coming years, the creation of a new national training centre will require significant expenditure.

Entrées et mises en service d'immobilisations au cours de l'année 2023 (en M€)



© Dominique Martel - Domimage - © Pierre Paoli - © Damien Langlet

## II. THE ORGANIZATION OF SEA RESCUE

In 2023, volunteer rescuers carried out more than 1 million hours of voluntary work. A valuation estimated at 54.9 million euros, of which 50.3 million euros represent the social missions of the SNSM.

### II.1 RESCUERS ON BOARD OFFSHORE

The SNSM's on-board rescuers are the first link in the rescue chain for people in a real or potential shipwreck situation. Their responsiveness, their know-how, their in-depth knowledge of the navigation zones, their equipment and their skills in managing rescue operations are essential for them to be able to carry out their missions successfully.

**Distributed in 206 rescue stations (permanent and seasonal) along the coast in mainland France and overseas, the on-board rescuers set sail upon alert from the CROSS – operational surveillance and rescue centres – in less than 20 minutes, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in all weathers.**

They intervene up to 20 miles from the coast (about 37 kilometers), or even further at the express request of the CROSS. On board, each member of the crew has their own specialty:

- **The boss** : appointed by the president of the SNSM, he is the conductor of the rescue operations in sea ;
- **The radio navigator** : he is in charge of all aspects related to telecommunications; • **The mechanic** : he is responsible for the technical maintenance of the means; • **The on-board swimmer** : he is the first crew member to get into the water during interventions that require him require ;
- **The boatman** : he takes part in all the rescue maneuvers and actions, on deck or in the setting up implementation of on-board equipment.



© SNSM Cap d'Agde - © Damien Langlet

#### How to become an on-board lifeguard?

You should contact the president of the station closest to your home, which should be located only a few kilometers from the structure in order to be able to board quickly in the event of an alert. The minimum age to join an SNSM crew is 18 years and a maximum of 66 years.

#### KEY FIGURES 2023

- **6,200** volunteers dedicated to offshore rescue (operational, trainers, managers, etc.);
- **4,973** interventions at sea;
- **10,653** people rescued at sea and on beaches;
- **4,353** floats involved;
- **5,536** exercises;
- **1 hour 42 minutes** of intervention time in average ;
- **21%** of night interventions.

Average age **50** years

**9** years: average length of engagement with the SNSM

## II.2 RESCUERS ON THE COAST

Lifeguards supervise swimming and provide care on beaches. With the increase in the number of holidaymakers on beaches and the proliferation of water sports on the seaside, lifeguards play a key role in prevention and improving safety. They help reduce the number of accidents on the French coast.

**The SNSM trains lifeguards through its volunteer trainers, who are then made available to municipalities to monitor beaches during the summer season.**

In fact, it is the mayors who are responsible for the safety of their beaches within the 300-metre zone from the coastline. Lifeguards are then paid by the municipality that hires them.

During the year, lifeguards are volunteers attached to their training and intervention center, with which they carry out civil security missions in the context of public events, at sea or on land. (see IV.2 - Preliminary rescue systems p.21)

Each member of the first aid station has their own specialty:

- **The station manager** : he is in charge of the complete coordination of the first aid station – planning and management of teams, security of the supervised beach, supervision of equipment maintenance, management of rescue operations, etc.;
- **The deputy station chief** : he supports the station chief in all his functions and replaces him during his days off;
- **The qualified lifeguard** : he intervenes with any person in danger at sea, treats holidaymakers on the beaches and also carries out prevention actions with sea users.



© Maxime Huriez

### How to become a lifeguard?

Selections take place in September and training from September to June, with positions starting in July and August. 300 hours of training are required to become a lifeguard. You must contact the training and intervention center (CFI) closest to your home.

#### **KEY FIGURES 2023**

- **4,400** volunteers dedicated to coastal rescue (operational, trainers, managers, etc.);
- **1,322** lifeguards present on the beaches;
- **2,090** interventions from first aid stations on the beaches;
- **5,132** civil security interventions;
- **14,766** people treated in the summer on the beaches;
- **2,193** people taken care of during DPS;
- **229** first aid stations on the beaches;
- **138** local authorities

Average age **24** years

**4** years: average length of engagement with the SNSM



## II.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF RESCUE

### Sea rescue

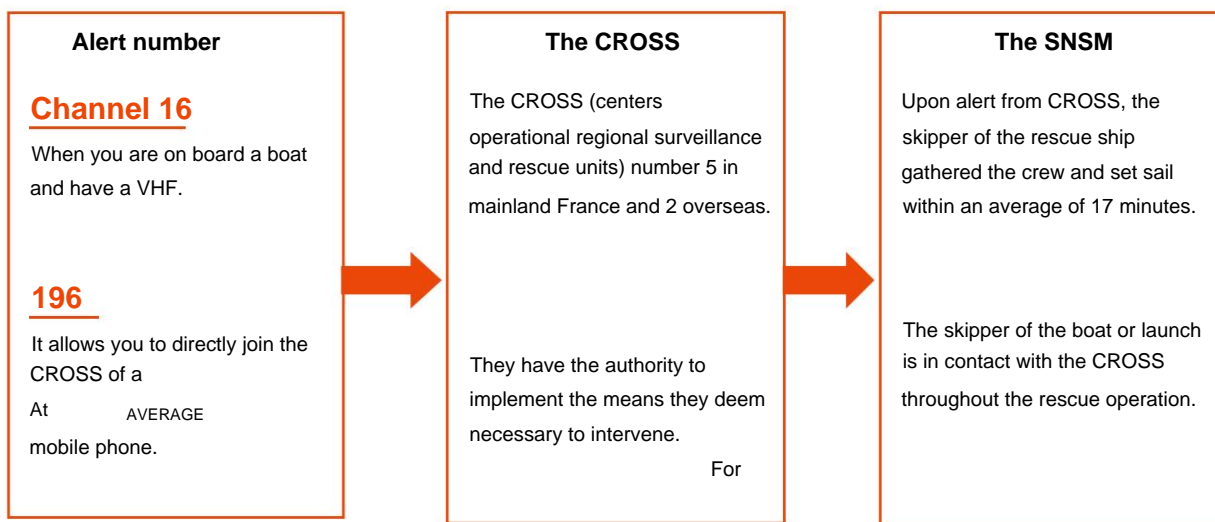
**The rescue of human life at sea is obligatory and free of charge.** It is imposed on anyone who is able to provide assistance, within the limits of their own safety.

The organization of sea rescue is based on two elements:

- Continuous monitoring of alerts, their processing and planning of rescue operations;
- Activation and coordination of units deployed on the ground which contribute to the execution of these operations.

Assistance to property gives rise to reimbursement of material costs incurred by rescuers. The proposed scale depends on the means deployed by the SNSM, the size of the person being assisted and the crew's intervention time.

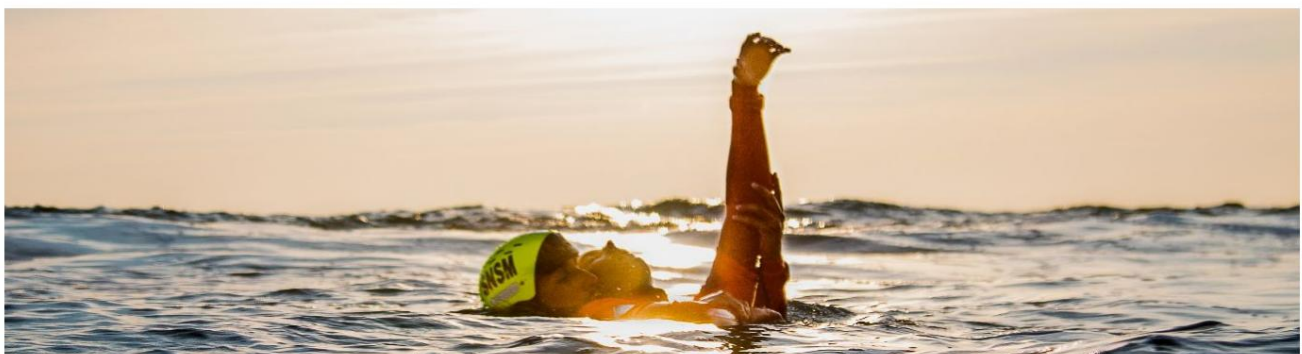
**The SNSM Sea Rescuers are the first link in the sea rescue chain. They carry out more than 50% of offshore interventions, coordinated by the CROSS.**



Rescuers assess the condition of those rescued, provide first aid and bring the injured and shipwrecked back to shore, where other agencies take charge of them and evacuate them.

#### **What are the reasons for intervention?**

Damage **is the leading cause of interventions at sea (50%)**, whether it is engine, electrical, rudder, engaged propeller, water ingress or even broken moorings. This is followed by **groundings**, often linked to a lack of knowledge of the geographical area (12%). These reasons for intervention, primarily material, can lead to endangerment of users. The SNSM is therefore particularly vigilant for the safety of all at sea.



© Marcus Vignon

## Rescue on the coast

In addition to sea rescue, the SNSM **trains, equips and assigns nearly 1,500 lifeguards each year**, who man 35% of the lifeguard stations on beaches, under the responsibility of the mayors of coastal municipalities. From June to September, the SNSM Sea Rescuers **ensure the safety of holidaymakers on a third of French beaches, supervised** from the lifeguard stations during the summer season.

### Alert number

**112 from the beach**

It allows emergency services to be contacted to trigger an intervention on the coast.

**Swimmers, water sports enthusiasts** (stand-up paddle, kitesurfing, kayaking, jet skiing, water skiing, etc.), but also **boaters** located within the 300-meter strip: there are many sea users. The Sea Rescuers operate throughout the summer in situations of **drowning and accidents and upstream to prevent them**.

On the beach, the interventions are varied: **illnesses, heat stroke, injuries, weever stings, searches for children lost on the beach, etc.**



© Maxime Huriez

To enjoy the beach safely, the bathing areas are supervised and lifeguards play a preventive role with holidaymakers.

### **New signage on the beaches since summer 2022**

Decree No. 2022-105 of January 31, 2022 relating to the signaling equipment used for supervised bathing at the beach has developed and harmonized the signage on the coast in order to be in accordance with **international standards**.

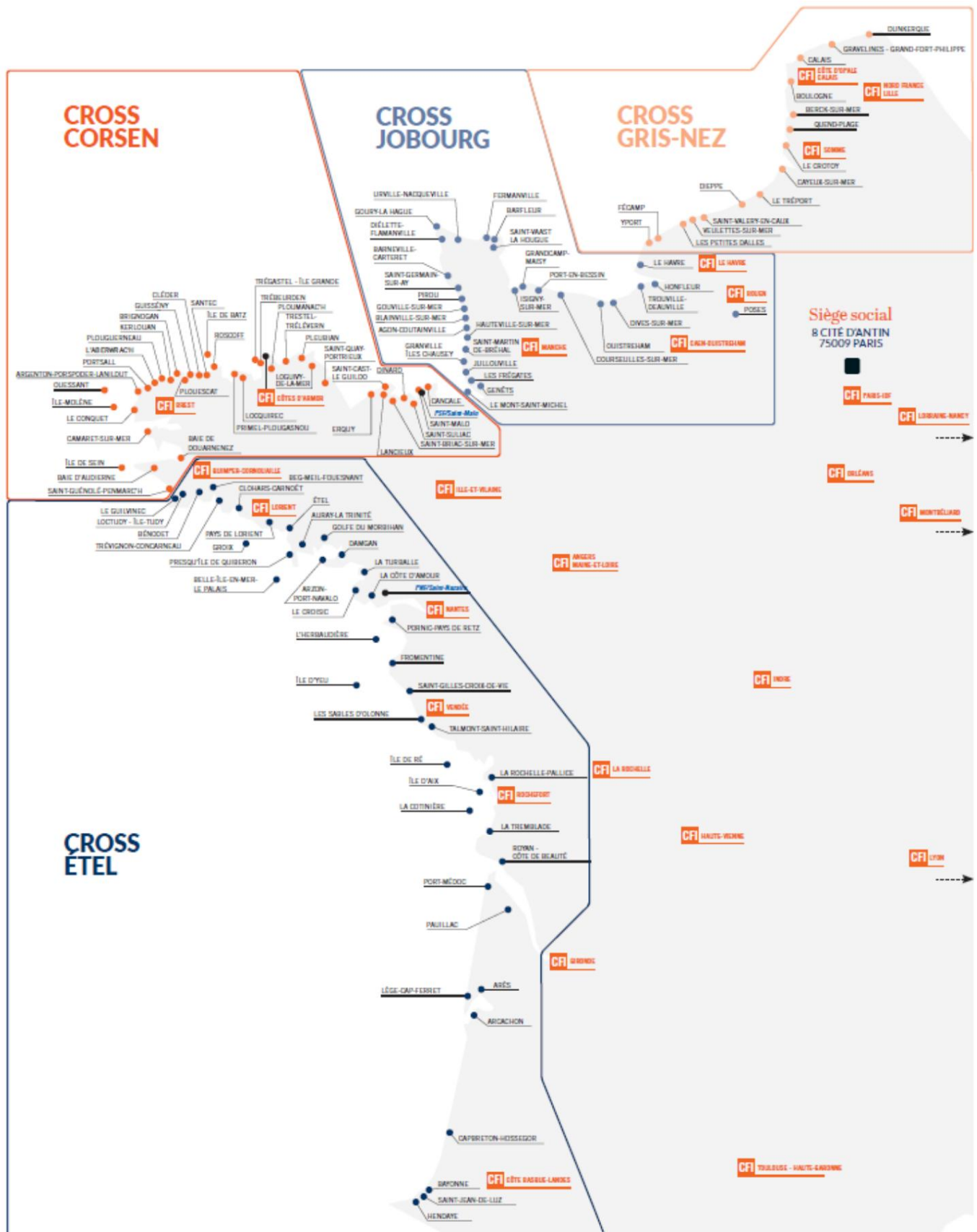
From now on, the flags relating to bathing conditions are **rectangular in shape** and cannot bear any symbol or inscription. The flagpole must make the signals visible at all points in the bathing area. **The supervised bathing area is now demarcated by two-tone yellow and red flags**. The decree in its entirety can be consulted on: <https://bit.ly/3vfl9wd>

### **Increased vigilance for water sports and leisure activities •**

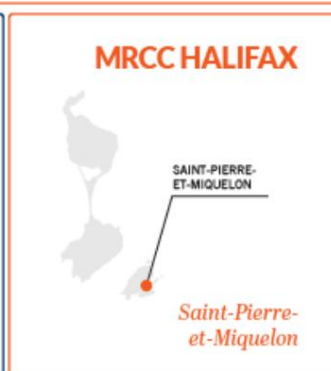
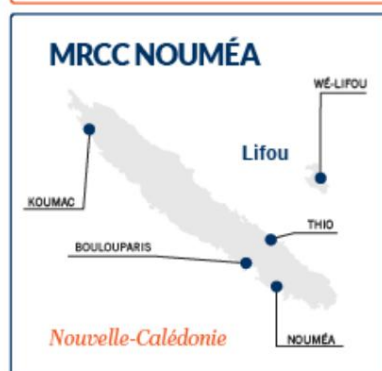
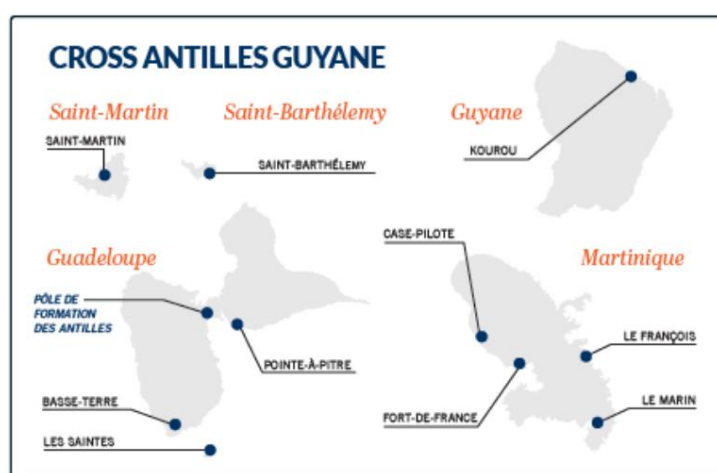
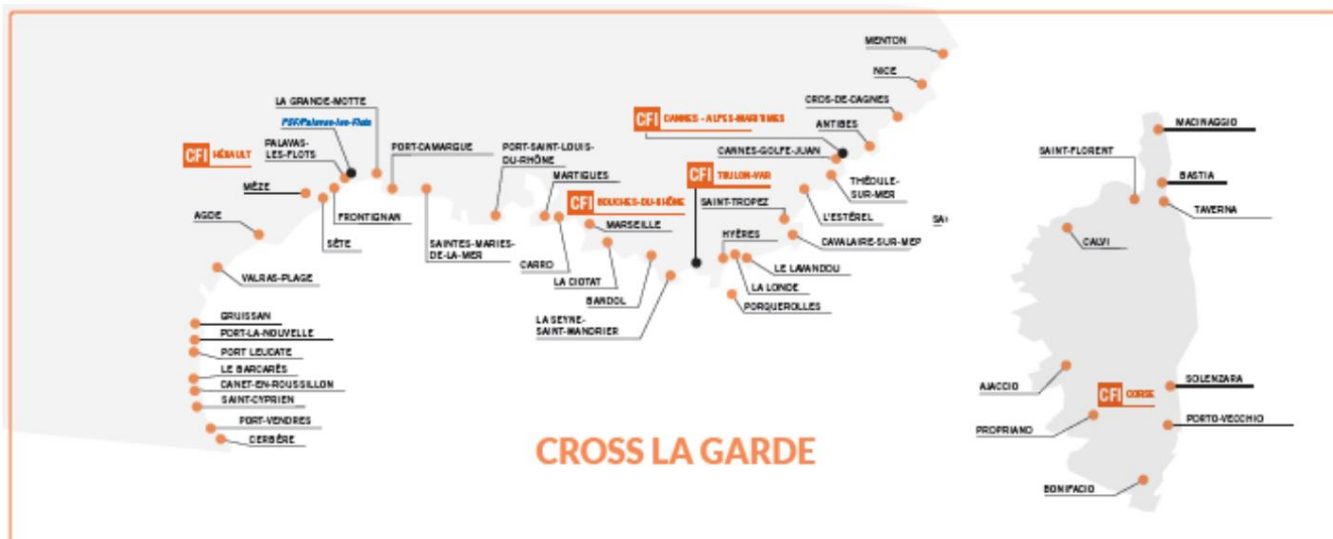
**Water sports and leisure activities** : for some time now, the number of interventions by Sea Rescuers with water sports enthusiasts has been increasing. Windsurfing, kayaking, kitesurfing, stand-up paddleboarding, Jet-Ski®, wingfoiling and other new water sports are becoming increasingly popular with enthusiasts. This situation is leading to increased mobilisation of lifeguards, who are dealing with athletes who are not always experienced or careful. Sea Rescuers are therefore calling for the greatest vigilance at sea, to make the most of these activities without danger.

- **The high tides** attract many walkers, shore fishermen and fishermen every year. photographers, who, due to lack of information, sometimes put themselves in danger without realizing it. The Sea Rescuers carry out around a hundred interventions every year to find and recover people isolated by the tides. To ensure that this moment on the foreshore takes place in complete safety, be vigilant, equip yourself and find out about the tides!

## II.4 INSTALLATION OF RESCUE STRUCTURES







NB : les représentations ne sont pas à l'échelle.

## II.5 THE FLEET

The SNSM is in charge of a fleet of 756 boats, from the **1st category offshore rescue vessel to the jet ski**. 339 are intended for sea rescue and 417 for beach surveillance and nautical safety and training.

The acquisition and maintenance of the fleet represent a **significant investment each year**, which is increasing with the current need to renew offshore vessels. **With an average age of 19 years** and more than 20 different types of vessels, the SNSM fleet is ageing and heterogeneous, involving significant construction, maintenance and training costs.

The SNSM has therefore initiated a large-scale ship renewal plan. This new construction program was designed by integrating the feedback from a working group, mainly composed of SNSM rescuers, and the detailed analysis of accident rates and geographical areas of use in sea.

### The construction sites mobilized

To co-construct this fleet renewal, the SNSM called upon a project manager: the

**Couach Shipyard (CNC)**, based in Gujan-Maestras (Gironde). After the study and construction stages

then industrialization and sea trials of the first ships, the program is now in its mass production phase. The Sea Rescuers are gradually trained to take charge of these new ships.

At the same time, the SNSM had to deal with a delay in the construction of CNCs for intermediate range boats due to the health crisis and design difficulties. Given the urgent need to renew certain units, it therefore entrusted the production of **type 1 coastal rescue boats (VSC1)** of less than 12 metres to two other shipyards: **Chantiers Gatto** based in Martigues (Bouches-du-Rhône) and **Pors-Moro** based in Pont-l'Abbé (Finistère). This vector is largely inspired by the previous range known as "V2NG" which already equips many stations in mainland France and overseas.

### This new range of ships meets several objectives:

- Address the aging of current boats; • Standardize the fleet used for rescues carried out from the beach to the open sea and thus optimize training and maintenance;
- Improve the safety of lifeguards; • Adapt to new practices of coastal users and respond to ecological issues.

Structured around two categories of vessels, the new SNSM fleet thus provides rescue intervention coverage **from the beach to the open sea: offshore vessels** capable of intervening efficiently and safely in heavy weather up to 50 nautical miles (approximately 92 kilometers), and lighter **coastal vessels**, designed to provide assistance very quickly and reactively, preferably within the 10 nautical mile band (approximately 18 kilometers).

### Offshore rescue vessels



Offshore Rescue Vessel – NSH1



All-weather canoe - CTT



1st Class Star – V1

### Coastal rescue vessels



Coastal Rescue Vessel – VSC1



2nd class star – V2



Light vessel - VL



Semi-rigid – NSC2



Semi-rigid – NSC3

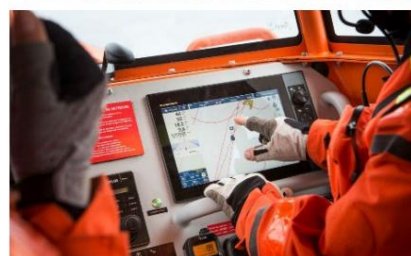
### A new livery Designer

**Philippe Starck** has kindly agreed to put his skills at the service of the Sea Rescuers by proposing a new livery for all the vessels in the range. **Modern, distinctive and timeless, this new identity aims to make SNSM vessels more visible at sea, and to establish a strong and recognizable image of the association.** Another important advantage: the colors

chosen will lead to a reduction in maintenance costs.

### New features related to technology and rescue

- **A range of standardized vessels with proposed options** : to meet the diversity of areas and intervention conditions, new vessels take into account, from their design, the capacity to integrate a certain number of options. The range goes from major options (shaft or waterjet propulsion system) to options for additional installations or equipment (generator, folding mast, infrared camera, solar panels, etc.).
- **An innovative system for recovering shipwreck victims** : ships  
NSH1 offshore vessels are equipped with a recovery system with a scoop at the rear for quick and safe maneuvering when picking up shipwrecked people. This equipment has many advantages during an intervention: easier recovery of a shipwrecked person, a rear beach better suited to divers, better visibility for the helmsman, limited rolling impact, etc.
- **A connected ship architecture** : an integrated communication system transmits services and data via VHF in 4G, MF/HF or via satellite. A true networked ship erasing the current border between land and sea, and facilitating exchanges with the CROSS and other stakeholders present in the area.
- **The integration of modern sea research tools** : the use of marine drones or thermal cameras, for example, has been planned in the design of the ship in order to facilitate research and conduct at sea, anticipating future technological developments.



© Stéphane Lagoutte - MYOP

### The deployment

- The SNSM has been working on renewing its fleet for ten years.
- October 2019: Signature of a design and production contract with **Chantier Naval Couach (CNC)**.
- Since 2020: Study, industrialization and testing phases, entry into production of the NSH1, the flagship of the range.
- October 2022: Delivery then blessing of the first NSH1 at the Noirmoutier SNSM station.  
*After delivery to the SNSM stations of Noirmoutier, Goury-la-Hague and Ile d'Oléron, around ten other stations will be delivered by the end of 2025, from Aber Wrac'h to Calvi via Granville and Hyères.*
- July 2023: The **Gatto and Pors-Moro shipyards** are selected to meet the urgent need for renewal of some units of the range of ships. These are the new VSC1.
- January 2024: Construction of the first VSC1 unit.

**The Fleet Support Center (PSF)** in Saint-Malo was inaugurated in 2017. Its objectives are to provide technical support to stations for the maintenance and repair of their boats, logistical support and the provision of technical expertise. In Palavas-les-Flots, the SNSM also has a pre-positioned support point for expertise, intervention, maintenance and support operations at stations in the Mediterranean area.



## II.6 EQUIPMENT

The protection of rescuers, both individual and collective, is at the heart of the concerns of the SNSM, which is committed to doing everything possible to ensure the safety of rescuers during rescue operations and, more broadly, of sea users. This is why it regularly modernises its equipment and materials to **adapt to the new practices of coastal users**.



© SNSM Antibes

### **On-board lifeguard**

The on-board rescuer who works on the lifeboats wears a sea outfit consisting of a jacket and overalls **or a dry suit**, a **life jacket**, a **helmet**, boots and **gloves**.

Its equipment can be completed by a **lanyard** to ensure its safety on deck, a **VHF**

(radio) and a **flasher** for night visibility.



© Laurence Dunmore

### **Lifeguard**

The lifeguard who monitors the beaches in the summer and operates at sea, within the 300-metre band, is equipped with a **rescue tube** (a buoy specific to rescue), a **VHF**, fins, a **watch** and a **whistle** that he wears around his neck.

In the water, he is in a **swimsuit with lycra** or in **Neoprene® wetsuit**.



© Patrick Lopez

**On-board lifeguard** The on-board lifeguard is the first to enter the water when conditions do not allow rescue vessels to approach the callers as closely as possible.

**Neoprene® wetsuit, life jacket, helmet, fins, gloves and shoes** are essential.

The Total Foundation, a patron of the SNSM for fifteen years, contributes to the safety of rescuers and sea users. More than 25 million euros of equipment and training have been financed by this partner, including: • 4,500 individual lifeguard sets; • 2,000 latest generation sea sets and 1,800 pairs of safety boots; • The development and purchase of 3,700 individual location beacons; • The provision of semi-automatic defibrillators for coastal and offshore rescue resources.

By 2025, the Total Foundation will participate in financing individual and collective protective equipment, with a new generation of dry clothing.

## Gloves, boots, jackets, sea overalls, lanyards, location beacons: new ergonomic equipment and outfits



© SNSM / Marck & Balsan

After a three-year redesign, the on-board rescuers are now equipped with **new sea jackets and overalls, more ergonomic, more comfortable and adapted to current intervention conditions**. From the study of needs to manufacturing, the design of these new outfits has been meticulous, respecting the expectations of the rescuers as best as possible.

Surveys, polls, precise specifications, prototype testing over several months... Cyril Grimal, the head of the SNSM station in Cavalaire-sur-Mer, involved in the project, details the process: " *These tests allowed us to highlight our needs, what we liked and what we didn't like about the existing system. We organized tests in real conditions, with a panel of rescuers, men and women, of all sizes and with diverse experience, at sea, day and night.* "

More information: <https://bit.ly/new-sea-rescue-outfits>



© Plastimo / Baptiste Leglatin

Gloves, boots, and also the lanyard, essential equipment for any rescuer, have been redesigned. Eighteen months of development were necessary for this **new lanyard, which is more intuitive and provides greater safety**. With the same design as the outfits, the SNSM developed and tested the device before equipping the rescuers on board, who must use it as soon as sea conditions deteriorate and when they need to leave the wheelhouse. Attaching yourself to the lifeline is a priority.

Its advantages: made up of two strands, it offers the rescuer the possibility of easily move from one attachment point to another while remaining secure. The strands have retroreflective stitching to ensure visibility at night.



© SNSM / Syrlinks

Another new piece of equipment: the **individual location device (ILD)**.

Until now, Sea Rescuers were not equipped with an individual location beacon. The SNSM therefore decided to design a high-performance product that meets the most advanced standards. Suitable for professional use, this new 100% French beacon aims **to ensure a maximum level of safety for volunteers** in the event of a fall overboard.

Designed to be easily integrated into the self-inflating life jackets of rescuers, the DIL is automatically triggered in the event of a fall overboard. A signal is then displayed on the VHF on board the vessel, those of boats located nearby, as well as the CROSS (regional operational rescue and surveillance centre).

### ZOOM on the waterproof medical bag



© SNSM

Each rescue boat is equipped with a **waterproof medical bag**. It allows for the optimization of victim care, especially when the site is not accessible by boat. The main part of the bag is designed to carry an oxygen bottle (5 liters maximum) and has 6 pockets for medical equipment.

These pockets are easily identifiable thanks to a color system corresponding to the different types of care: ventilation, hemorrhage, etc. It has 2 compartments on the upper part, for very quick access to essential equipment.

### III. TRAINING OF RESCUERS

#### III.1 TRAINING, A PRIORITY ISSUE FOR THE SNSM

The training of Sea Rescuers has always been based on mentoring, thanks to veterans who pass on their experience and know-how in navigation and rescue. However, in order to respond to the changing profile of rescuers – increasingly less from maritime professions and more from water sports leisure practices and the demands of a more judicialized environment, **the SNSM created a national training department and inaugurated a National Training Center in 2011.** Since then, the association has structured training courses, developed rigorous and professional training standards, trained its trainers and developed its internship offer.



© Patrick Lopez

This development is gradual but voluntary. It is in addition to the mentoring and training, which are essential for lifeguards to acquire the skills and experience necessary to accomplish their mission from the beach to the open sea.

In addition to the exercises and training in the **206 rescue stations**, rescuers are trained at the **National Training Center (PNF), based in Saint-Nazaire**, and in the **32 training and intervention centers (CFI)** spread throughout metropolitan France.

Lifeguards who monitor beaches during the summer season complete their training throughout the school year (evenings, weekends and during school holidays). They can therefore train alongside their main activity (higher education for many). They are attached to the training and intervention centre closest to their home, then assigned to the beaches for the summer season.

***The challenge: that Sea Rescuers have the essential skills in navigation, rescue and first aid in order to carry out their missions in the best conditions of efficiency and safety for all.***

#### **SNSM training courses are recognized by the State**

*In 2018, the SNSM was approved as a **professional training organization**. 80% of the training it provides is therefore recognized by the State: first aid, beach surveillance, scuba diving and trainer training. At the end of 2021, the Ministry of the Sea approved the training course for SNSM crews by registering it in the **National Directory of Professional Certifications (RNCP)**, thus recognizing the training as professional training. Thanks to this recognition, the Sea Rescuers, all volunteers, have the opportunity to participate in training during their working hours, with the agreement of their employer.*



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### III.2 THE TRAINING COURSE

The transmission of expertise in navigation, rescue and first aid, as well as the constant updating of knowledge, are essential.

#### On-board rescuers = offshore rescue

Training is provided in the stations and during internships at the National Training Center. It is structured around major areas of expertise:

- Communication **maritime :** navigation, qualifications ...
- **Search and rescue operations :** search, operational diving, shipwreck rescue, firefighting, survival, etc.
- **Maintenance and logistics :** maintaining rescue resources in operational condition...
- **Management and general knowledge :** team management, stress management, etc.

#### Lifeguards = coastal rescue

To carry out a swimming pool surveillance activity, the regulations require the validation of two diplomas:

- **BNSSA :** National water safety and rescue certificate
- **PSE1 :** Level 1 team first aid

The SNSM requires additional qualifications for its lifeguards:

- **PSE2 :** Level 2 team first aid
- Coastal permit
- **CRR :** Restricted radiotelephone operator certificate
- **SSA littoral pilotage mention :** Surveillance and aquatic rescue on the coast



© SNSM Cavalaire

In addition to the common training cores, additional courses are offered on specific themes: rescue of dangerous coasts, piloting a marine jet, etc.

To meet a growing need and facilitate access to training, the SNSM has been deploying new **local training support** on each maritime coast since 2021.

Attached to the National Training Center, these trainers, also lifeguards, devote themselves to training team members, ensuring the monitoring of qualifications, while taking into consideration **the demands and expectations from the field, in a real management plan for training courses and volunteer skills.**



© SNSM CFI Brest

### III.3 TRAINING STRUCTURES

#### The National Training Center (PNF)

The **Saint-Nazaire National Training Center** is located on the Loire estuary. It has the advantage of offering many sites suitable for aquatic training, combined with theoretical training. It is housed in a 1,600 m<sup>2</sup> building

which includes classrooms, a hangar, changing rooms, and has a space set up in a cell of the port's submarine base.

In order to optimize training times, the PNF benefits from a **complete fleet** composed of 3 speedboats, 5 semi-rigid boats, 4 inflatable boats and 3 jet skis. It also has a **navigation simulation and operations management platform**, modernized in 2019.



© Didier Moreau

#### **A new hub under construction in Saint-Nazaire**

Still based in Saint-Nazaire, the new site aims to create a real center of expertise combining training and R&D, enabling volunteers to be trained and the equipment of tomorrow to be designed.

In a space of 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>, this new structure will have the following equipment and skills:

- **Training center to facilitate the organization of training** : classrooms, simulation center, video studio and e-learning sessions, changing rooms and equipment to support training carried out in a natural environment.
- **Expertise in designing operational equipment and writing training guidelines** : collaborative workplace welcoming volunteers, experts and partners involved in the design of equipment and the formalization of training and prevention guidelines.
- **Administrative to accommodate the training, purchasing and R&D departments of the SNSM** while being at volunteer service.
- **Support for operations to maintain the pole's rescue resources in operational condition** : spaces and tools **essential** for the storage and maintenance of boats, vehicles and equipment, in order to provide the resources necessary for conducting training and operations.

#### Training and intervention centers (CFI)

The primary purpose of the SNSM's 32 training and intervention centres (CFI) is to train lifeguards who supervise swimming during the summer season.



© Marianne Cossin

The theoretical and practical training provided thus allows the obtaining of the national regulatory diplomas to take charge of the surveillance of public bathing areas and the maritime supplements deemed essential by the SNSM so that the lifeguards can carry out their mission on the beaches.

Present on the coast but also inland (Paris, Lyon, Toulouse, Nancy, Orléans, etc.), the CFI also provide on-board rescuers from their local departments, and sometimes the general public, with the training for which they are approved.

Throughout the year, in addition to beach surveillance training, the CFIs carry out emergency preparedness measures (DPS) to ensure safety during public events (see IV.2 – *Emergency preparedness measures p.21*).

### III.4 A TRAINING PLAN FOR 2025

Faced with the changing profile of rescuers, combined with an increase in regulatory requirements, the SNSM has launched the deployment of an ambitious training plan since 2018.

2018: strengthening of training management teams;

2019: launch of a distance learning platform (e-learning);

2020: reorganization of training for on-board crew members and recruitment of local training support, deployed on each maritime front.

**The 2021-2025 training plan has been revised to take into account the Cap 2030 roadmap.**

Thus, by 2025:

- 100% of on-board lifeguards and divers will be qualified;
- 90% of on-board rescuers (compared to 70% today) will have the qualifications at the first relief;
- 70% to 80% of skippers will be trained in operational navigation and search and rescue operations;
- At least 50% of rescuers will have received training in personal survival techniques and fire-fighting.

***The ambition: to guarantee the safety and efficiency of the mission and cover all training needs.***



© Dominique Feron - Ulterior Portus

#### KEY FIGURES 2023

- 1 National Training Center (Saint-Nazaire); • 32 training and intervention centers; • 745 volunteer trainers; • 440,000 hours of training completed; • 5,536 exercises carried out in rescue stations;
- 13,894 training courses delivered; • 417 boats dedicated to training, beach surveillance and water safety. • €6.4 million in training expenditure



© CFI Calais



## IV. PREVENTION AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC

### IV.1 PREVENTING RISKS AND RAISE AWARENESS

Vacationers, boaters, fishermen, water sports enthusiasts, residents... Many people frequent the sea and the coast. Even though many think they will never have to call on the Sea Rescue, **nearly 30,000 of them are taken care of each year**, from the beach to the open sea, by the 11,000 SNSM volunteers.

Convinced that many accidents could be avoided and that **accountability comes through information and awareness-raising actions**, the Sea Rescuers regularly broadcast prevention messages and good practices so that everyone can enjoy the sea in complete safety.

Indeed, accidents – and even more so during the summer season – are largely due to a **lack of knowledge of the right actions to take at sea and on the coast**. Rescue demonstrations, sea rescue discovery workshops in schools, courtesy visits, etc. **The SNSM is increasing awareness-raising actions** for sea users.



© Maxime Huriez

### IV.2 PRELIMINARY EMERGENCY MEASURES

In addition to sea rescue and beach surveillance, Sea Rescuers are also mobilised for **emergency rescue operations (DPS)** and carry out **civil security missions**, within the framework of public events, on land (sporting events, concerts, football matches, etc.) or at sea (starts of nautical races, etc.), in the service of the populations.

Indeed, approved for civil security, the SNSM is the only organization which has the skills and the qualifications necessary to intervene jointly from the beach to the open sea. It holds all the national civil security approvals (ABCD) relating to its operational activity: • Approval A: assistance to people and water rescue; • Approval B: support and assistance actions for populations who are victims of accidents, disasters or

of disasters;

• Approval C: supervision of volunteers in the context of actions to support populations; • Approval D: alert and first aid points, provisional system for small to large-scale relief wingspan, safety of the practice of aquatic activities.

**Covid-19** : the SNSM was heavily mobilized during the Covid-19 pandemic and responded to requests from prefects, SAMU, EPHAD, and, more broadly, healthcare staff and the most vulnerable, for various missions: reinforcement in medical and hospital centers, delivery of medicines and food, island-continent medical transport, accompanying patients on medicalized TGVs, reinforcement in call centers, assistance with screening and vaccination, etc.



### IV.3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF SEA RESCUERS

- Take into consideration your physical abilities and **do not overestimate yourself** ! • Find out about **weather conditions**, currents, tides, the color of the flag, etc.

#### At the beach:

- **Swim** in supervised areas; • **Protect yourself from the sun to avoid sunstroke**;
- **Supervise your children**.

#### At sea: •

- **Check and mark your equipment** with your contact details before to go to sea;
- **Inform a loved one** of your departure to sea, and avoid leaving alone ;
- Equip yourself properly and **have a means of alerting and/or locating** ;
- **A life jacket is essential** in all circumstances !

#### ALERT NUMBERS

**196** : it allows you to join the CROSS by telephone (or VHF **Channel 16**) for a emergency at sea.

**112** : allows you to contact emergency services for an intervention on the beach and/or in the bathing area

### IV.4 NATIONAL SEA RESCUERS DAYS

The National Sea Rescue Days, established nine years ago by the Prime Minister, are taking place **every last weekend of June** in mainland France and overseas, on beaches and in local structures.

This is a national event, during which **all SNSM entities open their doors and organize events** : rescue demonstrations, training, boat visits, prevention workshops, sales of derivative products, etc. It is an opportunity for volunteers to meet with the general public to present the SNSM, its activities and its economic model, and also to promote the ongoing commitment of volunteers. They also aim to raise awareness among sea users about **good practices** and **first aid gestures before the start of the summer season**.

### IV.5 AWARENESS AND PREVENTION TOOLS

#### THE BEACH BRACELET, to

#### quickly find the children on the beach

In order to reassure families and further protect children on the beaches, the

Lifeguards in Sea distributes **for free**, and

for over thirty years, identification bracelets during the summer.



© Maxime Huriez

Parents can enter their phone number and are given advice on swimming, using beach equipment and finding lost children.

In 2023, 210,000 beach bracelets were distributed at first aid stations by lifeguards. *They are made available at first aid stations.*

#### THE SEEDS OF LIFEGUARDS DEVICE, to

#### raise awareness among young people

In order to raise awareness from a young age, the SNSM has developed the website

*Seeds of lifeguards*, in partnership with MAIF.

The system offers **preventive and fun content** on swimming in the sea, beach fun and water sports.

**Podcasts**, quizzes, advice sheets, fun videos and educational content are available to the whole family, as well as teachers.

on [www.grainesdesauveteurs.com](https://www.grainesdesauveteurs.com).



To find all the advice related to swimming, boating and water sports, go to: <https://bit.ly/conseils-prevention>

## V. HOW TO SUPPORT THE SNSM?

### V.1 DONATE TO SEA RESCUERS

The SNSM is an association recognized as being of public utility, financed at more than 70% by resources private, 60% of which comes from the generosity of the public and corporate sponsors. Making a donation to the SNSM means participating in the acquisition and maintenance of the rescue fleet and infrastructure, the training of rescuers and the purchase of their equipment for interventions.

#### KEY FIGURES

74% of private resources

26% public subsidies

214,000 donors

Donations from individuals are deductible from income tax up to 66% of their amount, within the limit of 20% of taxable income. **After tax reduction, giving €90 thus comes to only €31, or €2.58 per month.**

Similarly, a company can make a donation to the SNSM and/or agree to a **partnership** (financial sponsorship, product sharing, donation in kind, cash rounding, etc.). The donation entitles you to a tax reduction equal to 60% of its amount, taken into account within the limit of 0.5 % of annual turnover excluding tax.

**To make a donation, go to [don.snsm.org](https://don.snsm.org)**



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### V.2 MAKE A LEGACY

As a recognized association of public utility, the SNSM is **authorized to receive legacies, whether real estate or personal property**. The legacy allows to transmit by will all or part of its assets to the association, after the death of the testator or that of his surviving spouse. It is exempt from transfer tax, which allows to **see the amounts transmitted to be fully used for prevention, training and rescue missions**. It is possible to organize its

succession during his lifetime while preserving the reserved share of his direct heirs who cannot be disinherited.

### V.3 BUY IN SOLIDARITY THANKS TO THE SEA RESCUERS SHOP

The SNSM offers the sale of **derivative products via its online store**. In this way, everyone can **support the Sea Rescuers by buying in solidarity**. There are **summer and winter collections** renewed each year, with a varied range of products: clothing and luggage, toys and books for children, products related to first aid and navigation. There is something for all tastes and all budgets.

**To purchase a product from the online store, go to [laboutique.snsm.org](https://laboutique.snsm.org)**





## VI. KEY FIGURES

The SNSM is a non-profit association, recognized as being of public utility and a Major National Cause in 2017. Its main missions are sea rescue and beach surveillance.

It relies on 11,000 volunteers, who work from 206 rescue stations throughout France (mainland and overseas), 32 training and intervention centers and 229 beach rescue stations. The SNSM also relies on the National Training Center (PNF) based in Saint-Nazaire and two maintenance workshops located in Saint-Malo and Palavas-les-Flots.

It is financed 60% by private resources from the generosity of the public and businesses, 26% by public subsidies (State and local authorities), the remainder corresponding to service missions (predictive rescue systems, towing, ash scattering, etc.).

<b>Number of volunteers including:</b>	<b>11,000</b>
- Dedicated to offshore rescue	6,200
- Dedicated to coastal rescue	4,400
- Functional and occasional volunteers	400
<b>Number of employees</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Number of stations</b>	<b>206</b>
<b>Number of training and intervention centers (CFI)</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Number of beach lifeguard stations</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>Number of boats, including:</b>	<b>756</b>
- Dedicated to sea rescue	339
- Dedicated to training, beach surveillance and nautical safety	417
<b>Number of people supported, including:</b>	<b>27,411</b>
- People rescued	12,326
- People treated	14,766
- Lost and Found Children	319
<b>Number of interventions</b>	<b>9,256</b>
<b>Average duration of an intervention at sea</b>	<b>1 h 42</b>
<b>Night interventions</b>	<b>21%</b>

Figures 2023

Association of Sea Rescuers - SNSM. Association law 1901 Recognized as being  
of public utility by decree of April 30, 1970  
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