

The South African National Sea Rescue Institute scoops an international award for its survival swimming centres



corporates, government and trusts and can do things that other people can't do. So, for example, we can offer free swimming lessons to children who can't afford swimming lessons", he added.

The NSRI centre is a six-metre long swimming pool built in the back of a 12-metre shipping container. It is completely self-sufficient it includes high-tech monitoring equipment to ensure safety and high-quality water for the children to swim in.

"We can afford to do so because of the donations and sponsorships we get which allows us to train survival swimming instructors and water safety educators and then deploy them to areas that can't afford such privileges in our country", Ingram continued.

The NSRI is no stranger to receiving IMRF Awards. In 2016 they were runners-up for an Outstanding Team Contribution, in recognition of their water safety lessons for children, in 2018 their Pink Rescue Buoys won the Innovation and Technology section, in 2019 they were runners-up for the purpose designed rescue stretcher and lastly, in 2021 they were awarded winner in Innovation and Technology for the JetRIB, a revolutionary surf rescue craft, made by Admiral Powercats and Droomers Yamaha with NSRI.

"The SSC project would have been completely impossible to do as a money-making concern, but because we have so many generous sponsors within the swimming and construction companies, we are able to do it. Our containers are donated, the circulation filtration systems are donated; the swimming pool is donated and so on", concluded Ingram. ▲

The National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) has won the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) Award for the organisation's innovative Survival Swimming Centres. "We all want our children to not be afraid of water and to learn to swim early, not only for their safety but also for their enjoyment. However, not everyone can afford swimming lessons. And access to safe, clean water to learn to swim in is a real challenge, especially in the underprivileged parts of South Africa," said Andrew Ingram, drowning prevention manager at the NSRI.

"It's an amazing win for the NSRI, especially being at the Southern Point of Africa to be up against some of the wealthiest rescue services in the world. It's a real feather in our cap to have won in the category of Innovation and Technology again," he states.

Ingram said with so many different ideas the organisation has, it just goes to show the ability of the NSRI volunteers and staff to come up with new ideas that make such a huge difference to South Africans.

"When it comes to the Survival Swimming Centres (SSC) what we were trying to achieve is to give free swimming lessons to disadvantaged children in safe water. There are two problems with swimming lessons; the first one is that you need to be able to teach children or adults in water that is safe so that they are not going to be harmed by currents, structures in the water and dirty water. Secondly, you need to make the lessons affordable because most people in South Africa cannot afford to pay for swimming lessons", said Ingram.

"In a place where most places provide swimming lessons as a business, the difference is that the NSRI is so generously sponsored by individuals,