

**Sunday Telegraph 28.11.04**  
**Garrett collapses on Sydney beach**



ROCK star-turned-politician Peter Garrett was pulled from the surf and rushed to hospital yesterday after a dramatic incident at his local beach.

**Dizzy spell:** Peter Garrett Lifeguards gave the former Midnight Oil frontman oxygen as he lay on the sand unable to move.

Looking "grey and confused" and feeling dizzy, the 51-year-old Labor MP could not stand up, lifeguards said.

He had to be placed on a spinal board and lifted into an ambulance, which took him to hospital.

The drama began when Mr Garrett was bodysurfing in rough swell at Maroubra, in his electorate of Kingsford Smith, about 8am and began to feel weak.

A swimmer who had been chatting to Mr Garrett in the surf had to help him out of the water before calling to two nearby lifeguards.

Lifeguard **Paul Julian**, 34, rushed down to the shore while his colleague **Brad Carroll**, 28, retrieved resuscitation equipment from the lifeguard station.

Mr Garrett was lying on his back on the sand.

"I immediately began asking him questions and checking his pulse. I didn't realise it was Garrett at first," Mr Julian said.

"He looked really confused and quite distressed. I asked him: 'Did you swallow water, are you hurting anywhere, did you hit your head on a rock?' And he said: 'No'."

Senior lifeguards **Peter Halcro** and **Brett Christianson** then helped stabilise him.

"He said he felt dizzy. We placed on an oxygen mask and he said he didn't know what had happened. That was the weird thing," Mr Julian said. "We checked his pulse and it was fine."

He was taken to Prince of Wales Hospital where he underwent a series of tests. Mr Garrett's spokesman Simon Balderstone said there was no evidence he had suffered a heart attack or stroke and described the incident as a fainting spell.

"He felt weak coming out of the water. He tried to sum up a bit of energy but there wasn't any there," Mr Balderstone said.

"He found himself in a bit of trouble so signalled that he needed help.

"He had been working hard recently but not hard by his standards. He's pretty fit and healthy for a person of his age."

Mr Garrett's wife Doris drove from the family house in the Southern Highlands, where she was with their three daughters, when she heard the news.

Mr Balderstone said Mr Garrett was feeling better a few hours after the incident.

"He's fine, he's chirpy and he is eating a sandwich. He is active and is used to quite a strenuous lifestyle," he said. "He has no symptoms of being bitten by a blue bottle, there is no indication of heart trouble (and) he has been working no harder than normal. He body surfs most days at Maroubra."