

Salt Nippers: Water Safety - Standard Operating Procedure

Control Structure (Reference: SLSA Policy 1.1 Water Safety Procedures > 2.6 Roles)

When there is a patrol on the beach, control of water activities is the responsibility of the Patrol Captain (PC). The designated Water Safety Supervisor (WSS) must liaise with the PC during risk assessments and in the event the Safety & Rescue Plan must be activated.

When there is no patrol on the beach, the designated WSS is in charge of the water activity.

Water Safety Supervisor (Reference: SLSA Policy 1.1 Water Safety Procedures > 2.6.1 WSS)

As per SLSA guidelines, every organised water activity must have a designated Water Safety Supervisor (WSS). The WSS is responsible for initial and triggered risk assessments, layout of water activity areas and ensuring the correct ratio of water safety personnel to children are in the water as specified by SLSA Policy 1.1 Water Safety. The WSS is the sponsor of this SOP and is responsible for its amendment as SLSA policies are changed. The WS SOP is to be critically evaluated on change in appointment of Salt SLSC Captain or WSS, after any activation of the Safety & Rescue Plan or on discussion of a water safety related matter at a Salt SLSC committee meeting.

Risk assessments (Reference: SLSA Policy 1.1 Water Safety Procedures > 2. General Water Safety Procedures)

Risk assessments of the surf conditions MUST be carried out by the designated Water Safety Supervisor using the SLSA designated forms and procedure prior to the commencement of every water activities session. The Risk Assessment must be reviewed by the WSS if certain triggers occur and this may result in water activities being modified or suspended. Triggers for this review include changing tides, changing winds, approaching storm, incidences of broken equipment, number and severity of injuries, marine stingers, shark sightings, expressions of concerns by experienced individuals and beach authorities (Salt SLSC Club Captain, Salt SLSC Patrol Captain or Lifeguards).

Radios & Communications

The Water Safety Supervisor must carry a radio to communicate with Patrol. Age Manager will have a copy of the SLSA signals with their Lesson Guides.

Emergencies

In the event of a perceived or actual emergency, Age Managers, Salt SLSC Patrol Captain's, Water Safety team or Age Assistant will notify the Water Safety Supervisor or Salt SLSC Captain who may activate the **Safety & Rescue Plan**.

Water Safety Personal (WSP)

For all SLS surf sport competition and member training, it is **recommended** that water safety supervisors and personnel be clearly identified. A water safety uniform may be either:

SLS Patrol Uniform (If also an on-duty lifesaver):

- SLSA red and yellow quartered patrol cap secured under the chin (compulsory)
- SLSA patrol rash shirt (recommended)

Water safety uniform:

- A high visibility orange coloured cap secured under the chin (compulsory)
- A high visibility orange coloured rash shirt branded with 'WATER SAFETY' on the front and back of the shirt

WS personnel will enter the water with either a Rescue Board or Tube. Where water safety supervision ratios exist, at least 50% of water safety personnel must be in the water during the activity.

Proficiency Swims – Participation

Basic Proficiency swims must be held at a Salt SLSC Organised pool session (in a pool of minimum 25m length) to measured swim distances that are specified by Salt Nippers in compliance with SLSA requirements.

Although SLSA specifies minimum distances / swim times, Salt Nippers retains the absolute discretion to mandate longer distances and/or shorter swim times as they see fit, particularly for new members.

Supervision ratios only apply to junior activities where participants do not hold an SRC or above:

- i. For Junior Activities where participants are proficient the minimum supervision ratio is 1:5
- ii. For Junior Activities where participants are not proficient a ratio of 1:1 must apply.

Proficiency Swims – Competition

Competition proficiency swims are held at the beach to measured swim distances that are specified by Salt SLSC. To be eligible for extra club competition, children must complete the measured course in the specified time with no external assistance.

Although SLSA specifies minimum distances / swim times, Salt Nippers retains the absolute discretion to mandate longer distances and/or shorter swim times as they see fit, particularly for new members. Children successfully completing competition proficiency will have this marked off against their name, will be listed as proficient in Surfguard and are then eligible for entry in water events at external carnivals.

High Visibility Vests

High visibility vests are mandatory for all water activities to ensure visibility in and under the water. No child shall take part in an organised water activity without wearing a high visibility vest, preferably Pink with Salt logo.

Age Group Caps

Club caps are mandatory for all water activities as they both indicate the child is a member and allow Water Safety personnel to identify age groups in the water for purposes of segregation, monitoring and counting. No child shall take part in an organised activity without wearing a cap.

Count In, Count out

It is the responsibility of the Age Manager to designate an Age Assistant or Water Safety Team member (SPOTTER) to count children before each surf swim, board race or relay. This adult is to conduct a COUNT IN at the start of each event, maintain a watch over the children during the event and a COUNT OUT at the end of the event. The COUNT OUT must include children that complete the course, children that return to shore without completing the course and children that are rescued. Particular care must be taken to observe children that drift into adjacent water areas due to cross currents. In the event COUNT OUT does not match COUNT IN the Spotter must raise the alarm with the Age Manager and Water Safety Supervisor. **Safety & Rescue plan will be activated.**

Water Areas – Layout

There will be a maximum of 2 designated water areas marked out by discipline marker and buoys, where applicable.

Where conditions suit, the Swim area will be located “up Sweep” of the patrol Flags and the Board area will be “down Sweep”. This will ensure any Swimmers will drift into the flagged area and any drift with the Boards will remain clear of the flags.