

SURFBOARD, BODYBOARD AND WAVE SKI RIDING

INTRODUCTION

Parents or caregivers must be informed of full details of the possible locations, mobile phone number for emergency contact purposes, supervision to be provided, activities to be undertaken, cost, pre-requisite qualifications and transport arrangements including intended departure and return times before their written permission is obtained.

The activity permission note must contain a clause authorising medical aid if it is considered necessary by the supervising teacher. The note should also include a section where the parent advises the school of any illness or medical condition that the student suffers from, or any medication the student is currently taking.

Students are to be instructed to use appropriate and adequate protection in summer or winter conditions:

- In summer, an SPF30+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen reapplied regularly and a hat and shirt when appropriate. At least a rash vest as a top in summer or warmer weather. Rash vests provide good sun protection.
- A wetsuit in winter or cold weather is strongly advised.

Teachers planning surfing activities need to be familiar with the procedures detailed in the memorandum Excursions and Other Visits (97/137).

STUDENT PRE-REQUISITES AND EXPERIENCE

Participating students must possess either a Surf Life Saving Association (SLSA) Surf Survival Certificate or a Bronze Medallion and be competent swimmers. The teacher-in-charge, prior to the sport being offered, must check that each intending participant is capable of swimming 200m, in a still water pool not less than 25m, in under 5 minutes. This is an annual requirement.

Additionally students should be given assessed annually in the areas of surfboard rescue techniques and first aid/emergency care procedures.

Surf Rescue and Surf Lifesaving certificates, whilst very valuable, are not sufficient qualifications for school surfing activities. However, students possessing these qualifications can use them towards completing the SSC provided they complete the Self Survival and Recreational Surf Craft Rescue components of the course.

Schools may facilitate Surf Survival courses, or alternatively, arrange for students to undertake comparable courses sponsored by the Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguards Association, Surfing Australia or other providers recognised by DET.

SURF SURVIVAL CERTIFICATES

SLSNSW issues Surf Survival Certificates. Schools may also purchase Surf Survival student training manuals, instructional video and teacher instructional guide. *See below for contact details.*

TEACHER/INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Surfing skills and fitness levels expected of school surfing supervisors are rigorous considering the activity environment. School Surfing has been successful because of this feature as well as the intrinsic nature of the activity.

Teachers of School Surfing or any involved non-teacher instructors must, as a minimum:

- Possess a SLSA Surf Rescue Certificate or equivalent or higher award, such as an APOLA School Surfing Supervisor Award (SSSA) or an Australian Coaching Council Surfing Australia Level 1 Surf Riding qualification
- Be competent surfboard, bodyboard or wave ski riders, as determined at any annual re-accreditation days conducted by SLS, APOLA or another provider approved by DET
- Successfully complete an annual proficiency update that includes the following fitness pre-requisite activities being signed off by the principal or delegated officer, before teachers present themselves for an initial or annual re-accreditation in the above awards:
 1. Swim 500 metres in a pool of not less than 25m in less than 12 minutes
 2. Run a measured flat course of 1000 metres in less than 6 minutes
- Possess recognised current training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and emergency care. *This is a mandatory annual requirement for all DET teachers who wish to participate in any school water based activities.*

Training providers:

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) and the Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguards Association (APOLA) facilitate the required courses for teachers.

APOLA: telephone (02) 4385 5267, Fax 4385 5267, email info@apola.asn.au

SLSNSW : telephone (02) 99847188, Fax 99847199,
email experts@surflifesaving.com.au

SUPERVISION

The teacher to student ratio must not exceed 1 :20, with no more than ten (10) students being in the water at anyone time. Principals and organising teachers should take into account such factors as age, experience and maturity of the students, experience and qualifications of the adult supervisors and venue characteristics when arranging supervision.

Where a beach patrol is operating, schools must still meet the supervision ratio, stipulated

qualifications and maintain supervisory responsibility.

BUDDY SYSTEM

The buddy system facilitates safety in the supervision of students. Half the number of students are to form a shore patrol and monitor a designated "buddy" in the water. At least one (1) teacher must be responsible for the shore patrol.

The teacher-in-charge is responsible for maintaining a time record (or log) of each session. The record must include a description of the surfing conditions on any given day.

EQUIPMENT

All equipment must be checked to ensure that it is in working order. Damaged surf boards, which have sharp exposed edges, are not to be used

Leg or wrist ropes must be worn for board riding. For wave skis, a quality wave ski rope must be attached to paddles. For body boarding, the use of flippers is mandatory.

The surfing activity is not to take place unless the shore patrol has on the beach the following standard safety equipment:

- A designated rescue craft such as a rescue board or rescue tube
- effective flag and whistle shore-to-surf signalling devices and flags to mark surfing locations.
- emergency phone or radio communication. Activity leaders should allow for the fact that mobile phones may not operate in all locales.
- first aid kit containing the following basic items:

stainless steel scissors and forceps, 10ml irrigators (in twist top plastic ampoules) x 2, Betadine or alcohol swipes x 5, conforming bandage 7.5cm crepe bandage, 7.5cm triangular bandage, resealable bag containing surgical gloves, 12 plastic strips, sterile pad 7.5cm square, eye pad, steri strips, cotton buds, instant ice pack, adhesive tape in dispenser, large trauma pad 100mm square, whistle, disposable lighter, double ended steel probe (for sea eggs or glass), emergency space blanket, Laerdal pocket mask (order from Laerdal on 1800331565), a tube (not a spray pack) of Stingose. All material can be housed in a plastic tool or tackle box.

Surf helmets for surfboard, bodyboard and wave ski activities are an optional surfing accessory and participants should be encouraged to obtain this personal safety equipment.

VENUES

Surfboard and body board riding

Depending on prevailing conditions, a surfing location adjacent to a patrolled area, if one is available, should be considered. Selected beaches must have emergency vehicle access.

Wave ski activities

These must be conducted in an area segregated from other surfers in the group in order to avoid the risk of collisions.

SELECTING SURFING LOCATIONS

The location for any of the activities must be selected with consideration of the following:

- the teacher-in-charge or the instructor must have first hand knowledge of the area to be used and be satisfied of its suitability for the program and the student group. The skill and experience level of the less able in the group must be a major determining factor in picking a location on any given day.
- the prevailing water and surf conditions in the selected area must be appraised for activity suitability prior to students entering the water. Where it is possible, the teacher-in-charge should consult the lifeguard on duty. If the conditions are deemed to be unsuitable by beach authorities, or the beach chosen for the activity has been closed, the activity must be cancelled.
- the surfing activity area must be defined to students and the teacher-in-charge must enforce the use of only the specified area.
- Bombora surfing and reef wave skiing are not permitted. This means that wave ski riding is not to take place at rocky locations.
- Bodyboarders are not to surf in shallow intense close out conditions.

SAFETY

The following safety strategies must be employed:

- A pre-determined emergency action plan has been prepared covering possible exigencies
- ensure students are aware of the defined surfing area before they enter the water
- if at a patrolled beach, notify the lifeguard or mobile patrol on arrival
- ensure that rescue and signalling equipment is functional and accessible
- make regular checks on surf conditions to ensure suitability for the entire group
- a roll check is to be made every time students enter or leave the water. This is greatly facilitated by the buddy system

- ensure one adult supervisor is always observing the activity from the beach
- the teacher-in-charge must ensure that all participating students are qualified before taking surfing for sport
- instruction of students in flag and whistle signals and the required responses
- instruction of students in evacuation procedures and techniques for assisting fellow surfers in difficulty
- instruction of students in nature conservation issues and the need to protect marine environments
- Body board participants must be instructed to avoid surfing in vigorous shore breaks
- Other surfing activities not detailed in this document, for example, tow-in surfing or kite surfing, are not to be undertaken.

Post Script: These guidelines have been formulated after consultation and agreement between executive officers of the NSW Surf Life Saving Association, the Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguards Association and the Australian School Surfing Association in cooperation with the NSW School Sports Unit.

Thanks Dave, Phil, John and Milton - Jim Bradley