

NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURE

&

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

(Woolacombe Beach)

2018

Normal Operating Procedure



This document should be read in conjunction with the most current SLISGB National Safety Guide Training and Coaching guide

Acronyms

EAP	Emergency Action Plan
ILS	International Life Saving
IRB	Inshore Rescue Boat
NOP	Normal Operating Procedure
NGB	National Governing Body
PAR-Q	Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire
RA	Risk Assessment (including Generic)
RNLI	Royal National Lifesaving Institution
ARA	Analytical Risk Assessment
DRA	Dynamic Risk Assessment
SLS	Surf Life Saving
SLSC	Surf Life Saving Club
SLSGB	Surf Life Saving GB

Roles and Responsibilities (as defined by WSLSC committee)

Head Coach

The head coach (on the day of training), has complete and overall responsibility at all times for the safety and running of the session. They should liaise and take direction from the safety team to ensure the following:

1. the implementation of the NOP & EOP during training sessions;
2. that an analytical risk assessment is completed prior to every session and use it to alter the planned session as required;
3. ensure the correct deployment of safety cover in accordance with SLSGB guidelines;
4. communicate with the safety team using the correct lifeguard signals.

All emergencies and requests for medical assistance must go through the head coach who will then liaise with the appropriate emergency services in line with the EAP.

The RNLI (if present), will have authority if training within their designated areas of cover.

Safety Cover

For all aspects of training, coaching or competition activity in on open water and beach environment, safety cover must be provided by the organisers to a minimum standard as determined by a risk assessment.

The safety team will ...

1. have at least one Surf Lifeguard / Lifesaver, dependant on distance between sessions and from shore (see guidelines below);
2. be competent and qualified as defined by SLSGB guidelines;
3. be at least the number recommended by SLSGB guidelines;
4. be deployed by in accordance with SLSGB guidelines;
5. not be active participants in the training session and will be positioned so as to have a constant view of the whole training area and the members involved in order to respond instantly should the need arise;
6. wear appropriate clothing to enable them to be highly visible and to function to the best of their ability for the whole session;
7. use appropriate safety equipment to maintain a safe training environment;
8. communicate with the lead coach using the correct lifeguard signals;
9. have a beach based "Spotter" patrolling / observing training sessions who is in radio contact with the club hut.

N.B. Although no formal safety qualification is required to be a spotter, the volunteer must have sufficient information, training and supervision to allow them to fulfill the role effectively and with confidence.

Once the analytical risk assessment has been completed it may identify the need for more than one lifeguard / lifesaver to be at that particular session.

Qualified persons providing safety cover should be in reasonable proximity at all times to the trainees, whilst they are in an environment where safety cover has been deemed necessary by the risk assessment or communication should be available to alert safety cover to be deployed for sessions that travel greater distances from a zoned area.

NOP's, EAP's and RA's should be kept for a minimum of 7 years.

Safety Information and Risk Assessments

The generic risk assessment is an overarching guide to ensure thoughts, observations, known risks and incidents relating to the location are recorded in a chart. It is always used as the starting point as an essential safety reference for all sessions.

At the point at the coach/trainer arrives to manage the session there must be an on the spot, on the day observed check of hazards and risks to ensure it is safe to conduct the planned activity on that day - this is then recorded on an Analytical Risk Assessment (ARA).

Importantly, during the session the coach/trainer and others in the Safety Team will monitor and consistently be aware of the environment and any new risks and adjust the session safety cover plan and make the Team members aware verbally; this is a dynamic risk assessment (DRA).

These changes must be recorded as soon as possible. DRA's should be reviewed by the Club Safety Officer and if they impact the RA, appropriate action taken to ensure that the RA is current and valid as the master safety guide

An ARA will be completed at the beginning of every session by the head coach and safety team. Coaches and trainees will be briefed on conditions before the sea session starts, and may be asked to modify the session to take account of the conditions.

Lead coaches will discuss conditions with their group before heading into the water, and every session will also include a reminder of the basic safety information eg. Signals, lifeguards, rips, etc.

A member of the safety team will patrol the water's edge and have radio contact with the desk and/or qualified First Aider.

The lead coach for each group will count participants before, during and at the end of every session.

Any child leaving a session early must be accompanied by their parent, member of the safety team or coach and the registration desk must be alerted by radio to expect them. They must sign out before leaving the beach.

Planned session should be altered to reflect conditions and risks highlighted in the assessment and its contents communicated to all coaches and helpers prior to a session beginning.

Risk should always be documented and include a time and date.

Completed risk assessments should be left with the registration team / desk and stored with the attendance records. They should be retained for a period as stipulated by the local Environment Health Officer.

Where an incident occurs the RA should be kept in accordance with SLSGB Rules. They should also be available for inspection by any authorised party. The SLSGB Accident/Incident Investigation and reporting policy should also be complied with.

Beach Layout

Beach Configuration

Medium hazard, flat sandy beach with rocks along north end. There is a stream joining the beach near the main entrance. Sandbanks and gullies can occur due to strong tidal action caused by strong winds. The beach is popular with both surfers and the general public and can become crowded during good weather, especially during school holidays.

Wave Type

Usually a spilling wave with occasional dumping waves where sandbanks are formed, more commonly at low tide.

Currents

Rip currents occur frequently anywhere along the bay.

Winds

Prevailing wind is south-westerly.

Beach is west facing so easterly winds pose problems to bathers and surf craft with the risk of being blown off shore.

Westerly winds pose the most dangerous conditions when strong.

Training Area- beach

As Woolacombe beach is often busy, most beach sessions will take place at Mill Rock where it is quieter.

Training Areas- Sea

Nippers will usually train close to or within the zone patrolled by the RNLI lifeguards. Older members with appropriate, qualified safety cover will usually train on the stretch of beach between the stream and Mill Rock, although this may be altered if sand banks or rip currents are prevalent or the beach is too crowded to train safely in these areas. It may also change if there is not sufficient qualified safety cover and then they will train within the lifeguarded area if the lifeguards allow.

There must be sufficient qualified safety cover in this instance, either in the sea on boards, with tubes, or on the land in sight of training.

N.B. If there is insufficient, qualified safety cover - sea training will be cancelled.

Access

Emergency vehicles use the stream as their access point. Club members will access the training areas with equipment either directly from the clubhouse which is located on the beach just north of the main beach entrance or by using the main beach entrance.

Training Sessions- Policies and Procedures

WSLSC have a Child Protection policy and the atmosphere of training sessions is always friendly and constructive. All coaches, parents and participants are required to sign a code of conduct, and bullying of any kind from any individual is not tolerated. All nippers are encouraged to speak to the Section Rep or the Child Protection Officer of any concerns.

All coaches and helpers must be SLSGB members and DBS checked.

Parents must not leave the beach unless they have allocated another person to look after their child in an emergency and have notified the registration desk and/or lead coach.

Information required

The parent consent form must have individuals' medical information, be signed by a parent/ guardian and also have an emergency number.

Signing in and out

All participants must sign in at the beginning of the session and out at the end of the session (for Nipper age group this must be done by parent or adult acting as guardian).

Should participants wish to go back in the sea after a training session, they must first sign out and get a parent/guardian's permission. They will no longer be the responsibility of WSLSC coaches or safety team.

Participant considerations

All participants must have completed a Parent Consent Form if under 16 older participants must complete a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q) before they can attend a session. Participants are able to join in sessions for a few weeks as they are insured for 'try out' sessions. Thereafter they must be members of the club so that they are fully insured.

Competencies

Nippers, and depending on coaches and conditions, also youth, are divided into groups of similar competencies, and given colour coded hats and rash vests so coaches know which group they are.

However, coaches and rescue cover continuously monitor this situation and participants will be asked to change groups for safety reasons.

Activities for Nippers and Youth

Beach: Running, beach games, sprinting, team sprints, dune runs, 1km run, beach flags and associated games

Sea: Board paddling, swimming, Wading, Dolphin Diving, Body surfing, ski paddling (for youth only)

Limpets (under 8's)

Training sessions will take place in a maximum of waist depth water. All children must have a parent or an allocated adult either at the water's edge or in the water close to them.

Some board paddling may take place on calm days with surf no more than 1 foot.

New, Unqualified and Level 1 Nippers

Most of every session will be in Nippers' depth. The exception being when doing 'run swim run' tests, or on very calm days (less than 2 foot waves).

All new Nipper members will start in this group until skill levels, knowledge and competency have been assessed.

Level 2 Nippers (and above)

For Nippers with a Level 2 Nipper awards and who the lead coach deems competent in 1-2 foot surf, some training may take place in deeper water.

Further Information

For more information on competency levels, refer to the SLSGB Skill Award Athlete Workbook. This is downloadable at www.sls.gb.org.uk/document-store.

Participant Ratios

The actual number of qualified persons required will be determined based on the analytical risk assessment completed by a competent person, immediately prior to a training or coaching session commencing.

These ratios (see below), have been established to provide the coach / trainer with an indicative ratio to ensure a safe coaching or training session, whilst allowing adequate development from a coach or trainer. These ratios are only a guide and coaches / trainers should only coach / train the number of participants they feel comfortable with (this may vary depending on the level of competency of the group and conditions).

There must be at least one qualified Surf Lifeguard or Surf Lifesaver as part of the safety team and an additional lifeguard / lifesaver for every session more than 300m apart.

Open Water & Beach Explanation

If a session is with a floating craft or in shallow water (waist depth) and the individuals are in sufficiently close proximity to the coach then greater ratios may be followed.

However, if no craft is being used and participants are out of their depth (deeper than waist depth), then additional safety cover may be required as identified in the analytical risk assessment, which must be undertaken prior to each session.

For all aspects of training, examinations, coaching or competition activity in an open water environment, safety cover should be provided by the organisers to a minimum standard as follows;

Buddy System

A buddy system has been used successfully for many years in Surf lifesaving coaching and training sessions. This can improve safety and enhance the learning experience of the Trainee. Less experienced Trainees pair up with a more experienced Trainees. Pairing may occur with those who are SLSGB Level 2 surf competency qualified or above (SLSGB Rescue Board Paddler, Tube Rescuer, Surf Life Saver or Beach/surf lifeguard awards also allowed).

Use of a Buddy may add to the safety cover ratios for a session but it is important to note that unless the Buddy used can assess the environment, self-rescue, provide support for their buddy and communicate for further assistance in an emergency situation the safety ratios will not be improved.

If using the Buddy System, The Person in Charge must establish one to one with each Buddy that the conditions are deemed to be OK with them and if OK then add relevant notes into the ARA for the session.

It is important that buddy pairs remain vigilant and in close proximity of each other to be able to recognise and assist each other if a situation arises. The Person in Charge must make sure that Buddies are briefed before the session starts.

Safety Ratios

The table below indicates the minimum ratios for the number of Trainees per Trainer or Coach (the Person in Charge) for training, coaching and examination sessions in an open water environment.

This is only a guide to be used as a starting point and will be varied in accordance with the ARA and the DRA for the session.

The ratios advised assume that safety cover as determined by the ARA and DRA is provided.

Example Situation	Indicative Ratio
Coach/Trainer is not acting as qualified safety cover and safety cover is provided to meet ARA and DRA.	1:10
Coach/Trainer is not acting as qualified safety cover and separate cover is provided and a buddy system is utilised with participants with appropriate competency awards for the situation - experience of buddies must be considered.	Above 1:10
Coach/Trainer is acting as qualified lifesaver cover in reasonable proximity to participants who are; A) with floating Craft or in Shallow Water or B) are Competency qualified and out of depth.	1:8
Coach/Trainer is acting as qualified lifesaver cover and in reasonable proximity to participants who are out of depth and non-competency qualified - subject to risk factors.	1:6

These situations are based on Prevailing conditions and physical capability of Trainees must be considered - ratios may change to meet these factors

Qualified Safety Cover

Must hold a current SLSGB Award (as appropriate to safety cover being given) ...

- **Tube Rescuer** - provide supporting water safety as a rescue tube swimmer
- **Rescue Board Paddler** - provide supporting water safety as a rescue board paddler
- **Aquatic First Aider** - administer basic life support and first aid skills within an aquatic environment
- **First Responder** - deliver intermediate life support
- **Surf Lifesaver** - provide lifesaving skills when providing safety cover as part of a water safety team or when working in close proximity to participants
- **Surf Lifeguard** - provide patrolling and water services in surf conditions, with rescue skills and advanced fitness requirements

Competency of Qualified Participant

- Surf conditions : SLSGB Competency Award Level 2 (in respective discipline)
- Flat conditions : SLSGB Competency Award Level 1 (in respective discipline)

Operation of Equipment

Boards

Nipper boards should be used outside the break only by competent paddlers, unless waves are less than 2 foot.

Adults can only use hard racing / rescue boards if ...

- If they are current club members; and
- have an appropriate SLSGB competency award (when coaching or acting as safety cover);
- are attending an adult training session improving their skills preparing to achieve an award.

Non-club members may only use boards during organised 'try out' sessions.

Rescue boards should be available, either at the water's edge or with one of the coaches in the session.

N.B. Soft boards are recommended for general safety cover (even for competent paddlers).

Tubes

Rescue tubes should be available at the water's edge when there are no RNLI lifeguards.

Skis

Full surf skis should not be used by Nippers, however junior 'Guppie' skis can be used by age 11 upwards; but only on calm days when there are not many public in the water.

First Aid Provision

On non- lifeguarded days / times, there will be a first aid kit available in a recognisable container in the club hut.

There will be one designated First Aider (named on the risk assessment form).

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Overview

Action to be taken in the event of a foreseeable emergency, for example:

- discovery of a casualty in the water
- first aid scenario
- lost person

Incident / Injury

In the event of an incident / injury occurring:

- remain calm and objective
- Cease the coaching activity and ensure all participants are safe from harm and will remain safe at a designated meeting point (i.e. on dry land / the club hut)
- Alert the designated surf lifesaver / lifeguard
- Provide comfort and reassurance
- Adhere to surf lifesaving Beach Lifeguard procedures for the injury / incident and assist the surf lifesaver / lifeguard where directed.
- Record the incident in the Surf Life Saving Club Incident report book - the incident must be recorded accurately.
- After the incident has occurred and been recorded it is the "Level 2" / supervising coach's responsibility to make suggestions for future alterations to be made to prevent recurrence and pass the forms onto the club safety officer / committee.
- In line with current guidelines and as a safeguard against future legal action (however unlikely), the incident report must be stored.

Critical / Serious Incident

In addition to the above, for more serious incidents ...

- All participants from every group should be brought out of the water and make their way to the clubhouse to sign out.
- An RNLI lifeguard or the emergency services should be contacted (by dialing 999), if a mobile phone is not available the nearest public phone box is located by the 'Red Barn' public house.
- The Grid Reference for the club hut is SS 456 436

Whistle Signals for Lifeguard on Duty

1. Whistle blow : Attract attention of bathers / coaching session
2. Whistle blows : Attract attention of another lifeguard
3. Whistle blows : Lifeguard taking emergency action