To: Club Presidents, Club Secretaries, Coaches, Junior Coordinators, Junior Team Managers
Cc: MLD Executive, MLD Council, Aquatic Sports Executive, Aquatic Sports Council

From: Kate McLauchlan - Manager, Membership & Leadership Development

Date: 5 February 2014

Subject: Reminder of Water Safety Policy 1.1 and Risk Assessment Procedures

Action: Please make sure all Risk Assessments Forms are filed upon completion

For additional details on this Circular please contact: M&LD Department on 03 9676 6945 or email kate.mclauchlan@lifesavingvictoria.com.au

Circulars are available at www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au/circulars

All Surf Life Saving affiliated organisations have a duty of care towards those participating in sanctioned surf lifesaving aquatic activities.

LSV is committed to ensuring all programs, events and activities are run at the highest standard with the safety of our members paramount at all times.

This Circular is a summary of the SLSA Water Safety Policy 1.1, which sets out the risk management procedures and minimum requirements for the provision of water safety.

The SLSA Water Safety Policy 1.1 is a legally binding document and must be adhered to SLSA Water Safety Policy1.1.

SLSA in conjunction with LSV and Clubs are required to provide water safety to all participants engaging in sanctioned surf lifesaving aquatic activities. These activities include:

- lifesaving activities for members
- lifesaving education activities for non-members
- junior activities

All aquatic activities must have appointed an appropriate Water Safety Supervisor. Prior to the commencement of all aquatic activities, the Water Safety Supervisor must adhere to the following:

- conduct a risk assessment of the area to determine if the activity is safe to be conducted
- adhere to the minimum supervision ratios and standard operating procedures
- employ a risk management strategy if the risk assessment determined any risk that may prevent the safe running of the activity/event

It has been determined that a risk assessment process must be conducted by a Water Safety Supervisor prior to commencing any aquatic activity, including niper programs, and junior events.

Water Safety Supervisors who identify a reasonable need to deviate from the SLSA Water Safety Policy 1.1 must present an alternative detailed risk assessment and management process and receive written permission from LSV's Director of Lifesaving Services.

Please refer to the SLSA Water Safety Procedure for further details.
Risk assessment is an important process in determining the adequate level of water safety in relation to the type of activity, beach and weather conditions, hazards, participant ability and age.

**Standard Risk Assessment and Management Process:**

Water Safety Supervisors are required to undertake a standard risk assessment process prior to the commencement of the aquatic activity and employ risk mitigation strategies to any identified risks. The risk management process must be documented. The Water Safety Supervisor must record, and if necessary, provide evidence of the outcome/result records. If the level of risk changes, the risk management and documentation process requires the Water Safety Supervisor to implement risk management strategies and record the change in the outcome/result records of the risk management process outcome/result must be kept on file with the relevant organisation for further reference.

**SUPERVISION RATIOS**

The following procedure is for the provision of water safety for all aquatic activities conducted by Surf Life Saving. They have been developed over many years of experience with the provision of water safety for aquatic activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILL LEVEL</th>
<th>RISK ASSESSMENT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low risk assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Activity Members – Nippers (unqualified)</td>
<td>1:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC/Bronze Medallion Holders (qualified)</td>
<td>1:12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RISK ASSESSMENT, RISK CHECK AND RISK MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

Suitable risk assessment, risk check and risk management tools includes:

- SLS water safety risk mobile app (also available in paper form in these procedures)
- SLS event risk mobile apps
- Guidelines for Safer Surf Clubs (available on the SLSA website)

The Aquatic Activity Risk Assessment and Management Form can be found at the link below:


Life Saving Victoria recommends that all clubs keep a conditions folder that contains all risk assessment documentation for a minimum of five years. This also includes risk assessments that are completed using the Water Safety Risk Mobile App. These Assessments must be emailed to the relevant person or club and printed out at the competition of the session.
### Summary from SLSA ‘Water Safety Procedure’ –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLS ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS WHO DO NOT HOLD A SRC OR ABOVE (UNQUALIFIED)</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE PROFICIENT SRC OR ABOVE (QUALIFIED)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Junior Activities</td>
<td>1:5 (Water safety personnel: participants)</td>
<td>Buddy procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:1 for Junior Preliminary Evaluations (Water safety personnel: participants)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Member Training</td>
<td>Buddy Procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Lifesaving and Sport)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surf Sport Competition</td>
<td>Refer to SLSA Surf Sport Manual</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanctioned/Special Events</td>
<td>Refer to ‘Guidelines for Safer Surf Clubs’</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Still Water Activities</td>
<td>Refer to local pool management requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifesaving Patrols</td>
<td>Refer to relevant State/Territory ‘Standard Operating Procedures’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The activity's level of risk will be determined once the Water Safety Supervisor has completed the risk assessment and management form.

Where unqualified participants are engaging in an activity with qualified participants, the minimum standards ratio for unqualified participants must be adhered to.

For small groups, with less than five unqualified and 12 qualified participants, a Water Safety Supervisor must still be appointed and take responsibility for the risk assessment and management process. However, additional water safety personnel may not need to be appointed.

**Roles and responsibilities of the Water Safety Supervisor**

*The Water Safety Supervisor must make sure that:*

- a risk assessment has been completed and the minimum supervision ratios and requirements are met before the commencement of any activity
- the correct rescue equipment and/or patrol is available

*Water safety personnel are:*

- suitably qualified and competent for the conditions
- briefed on the conditions likely to be encountered during the activity
- in good health and they have advised the Water Safety Supervisor of any pre-existing health conditions that may impact on their participation
- qualified and proficient for their role, please refer to SLSA Water Safety Policy 1.1 for definitions
- qualified with the specific award and a proficient operator in the use of rescue equipment, e.g. IRB driver, IRB crew, RWC operator