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SPHM  
HOSPITALITY

## SPHM – POOL LIFE GUARD MANUAL



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# Pool Life Guard Manual

# **POOL LIFEGUARD**

## **STAFF BOOKLET**

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## Purpose

A lifeguard manual is must for aquatic facilities to direct lifeguards and maintain minimum safety requirements for pool users.

The following template can be used as a starting point for facilities that do not currently have an Lifeguard Manual, or as a reference for those that are wishing to improve their current lifeguard manuals. It is important that you tailor the template and content to your aquatic facility's own operating environment.

## How To Use This Guide

Explain who uses this guide and who it is for.

The Lifeguard Manual is to be used by all lifeguards. It will be provided to each lifeguard at induction, and explained by management. Must be complied with. etc



## Introduction

This handbook has been developed as a compilation of Work Procedures and information related to the daily work of Lifeguards and other aquatic staff. This handbook is provided to all employees of <<enter facility name>> who have responsibilities related to working in the Aquatic Areas of <<enter facility name>>. All such staff are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the contents of this handbook, and the location and content of other documents and manuals referred to within.

The following diagram provides an overview of the organizational structure as it relates to the Aquatic Areas of <<enter facility name>>.

<<enter organizational structure for the Aquatics Area>>

## Aquatic Area Opening Hours

### Competition Pool Opening Hours

Monday to Friday	## am to ## pm
Saturday	## am to ## pm
Sunday and Public Holidays	## am to ## pm

### Outdoor Pool Opening Hours

Monday to Friday	## am to ## pm
Saturday	## am to ## pm
Sunday and Public Holidays	## am to ## pm

### Leisure Pool Area Opening Hours

Monday to Friday	## am to ## pm
Saturday	## am to ## pm
Sunday and Public Holidays	## am to ## pm

### Wave Pool Opening Hours

Monday to Friday	## am to ## pm
Saturday	## am to ## pm
Sunday and Public Holidays	## am to ## pm

## Centre Rules

- Children under the age of 10 must be actively supervised by a parent or guardian 16 years and over at all times in the aquatics area.
- All entries pay – i.e. there is a non-swimming fee.
- For health reasons, the use of the sauna, steam room and spas is restricted to customers aged 16 years and over. Patrons, who have paid for this service and members, will be issued with a wristband to indicate that they are entitled to use these areas. Customers wishing to use the sauna must bring and use their own sweat towel to sit on.
- When the movable floors are in use, customers will be asked to exit the pool until the floors have been safely moved.
- No rough play is to be permitted.
- Smoking in the facility is prohibited.
- No running allowed.

### Area Specific Rules

While the facility has rules that apply to the entire facility, each pool also has certain specific rules as follows:

#### Competition Pool Rules

- No diving if the floor is less than 1800mm (safety signage need to be displayed)
- No diving from the starting blocks if the floor is less than 2000mm deep (covers must be on blocks)
- Diving no permitted by the general public
- No Bombing
- Crossing the boom is not permitted for general access.

#### Outdoor Pool Rules

- No diving if the floor is less than 1800mm (safety signage need to be displayed)
- No diving from the starting blocks if the floor is less than 2000mm deep (covers must be on blocks)
- Diving no permitted by the general public
- No Bombing

#### Wave Pool Rules

- An adult must accompany children under 10 in the water when the waves are operating (within arms reach).
- Swimmers must keep at least 1 meter clear of bulkhead wall when waves are in operation.
- Swimmers must keep away from sidewalls when waves are in operation.
- Floatation devices are not permitted in this pool (mats, boggy boards, ect.)



### Toddlers/ Youngsters Pool Rules

- During peak times the pool is to be used by children up to the age of 6, non peak times the pool can be used as a toddlers pool for toddlers (children 2 years and under)  
**Peak:** Weekends, Public Holidays and School Holidays.  
**Non Peak:** Monday to Friday.

### Multi Purpose Pool Rules

- Diving in this is not allowed
- Equipment that can be used as a projectile should not be permitted in this pool for public use.
- Sitting on the entry steps in not to be permitted as it makes access in and out of the pool difficult.

### Diving Pool and Boards Customer Rules

- Two bounces only
- Queue as instructed
- Swim clear of boards immediately upon surfacing
- Maximum height – 3 meter towers or boards

### Spa's, Sauna & Steam Customer Rules

- Spa bands must be worn
- Patron must be over the **age of 16** to use these facilities

#### **Spa's**

- Putting head under water is not permitted
- Patrons should not stay in for longer than 20mins at a time

#### **Sauna and Steam**

- The Patrons must provide a Towel to sit on
- Lying on the benches is not permitted

### Slide Rules

- Feet first only. Sitting up or lying back is acceptable. **(Head first sliding is not permitted under any circumstances)**
- Children shorter than the hand rail may ride with an adult in tandem. **(This is comparable with the height limit)**
- Walk up the stairs – **Don't Run**
- Patrons must immediately leave the run out box
- Patrons must not wear eye wear (including goggles) in the slide.

### Inflatable Rules

- Children under the age of 10 should be accompanied by an adult.
- Once fallen of patrons must swim to the side and not attempt to climb back onto the inflatable
- Patrons are to only to climb stairs in a crouched position

- No standing on the inflatable at anytime
- All movement forward must be on knees, stomach or on bottom.
- No jumping of ramps and slides.
- When sliding patrons must go feet first down all slides and ramps

## Appearance/Uniform

- A guest's first impression of a Lifeguard is greatly influenced by the guard's appearance.
- A copy of the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic handbook was handed out at the Global Induction outlining appearance and uniform standard.
- Lifeguards also carry a bumbag, which should contain a pocket mask with an oxygen outlet, pen, and disposable gloves and a note book.
- A whistle must be worn at all times.
- Long hair tied back and minimum amount of jewellery should be worn.
- A Lifeguard must be well groomed. The Management reserves the right to send staff home based on poor presentation, if instruction to improve appearance can or will not be adhered to.
- The consumption of alcohol whilst working in the centre is not permitted at anytime.

## Body Language

A guest can perceive a Lifeguard's attitude from the guard's body language. For a guard to be professional they need to:

- look alert
- continuously scan the pool
- stand up straight
- Keep moving around your area
- **DO NOT TURN YOUR BACK ON THE POOL**

Examples of unprofessional body language:

- leaning on equipment

- putting a foot up on pool ladders



- turning your back on the pool
- folded arms
- playing with kickboards
- eating or chewing gum
- talking to other staff members or guests for an extended period of time whilst on deck

## Public Relations

- Communicating with guests is one of the main components of a Lifeguard's duties – however, guarding the pool is your priority, DO NOT compromise the safety of others, cover your area or refer the guest to reception. Knowledge of the Centre's programs and activities are gained from experience but it is vital that the Lifeguard has a general idea of what is going on around the Centre.
- If a Lifeguard is asked a question that they cannot answer, they should direct the guest to the right area or contact the Supervisor for assistance.
- If you feel the conversation may go on for a long time, ask the guest to hold on until you get your area covered.

## Scanning (Discussion & Visual Display ie. Whiteboard Diagram)

- Sight lines on deck. Areas where scan is not impaired or blocked by architecture or equipment such as inflatable or booms. Areas that allow Lifeguard to scan more than one pool eg. 25m, MPP and spas.
- Sight lines to the other Lifeguards on duty eg. Competition lifeguard, 25m lifeguard and wave pool lifeguard
- Best possible guarding positions (including wave pool) for;
  - + 2 guards
  - + 3 guards
  - + 4 guards

+ 5 guards (Visual Display)



- Rotations occur every 15 to 30 minutes so that senses are kept alert by different stimulation instead of watching the same water space for an extended period of time. Rotation from wave, lap and competition pool can rotate without the assistance of the Supervisor. However, rotating from the competition to the outdoor pool can only take place with the Supervisor covering one of the pools. It is the Lifeguards responsibility to alert the Supervisor of the timing of the rotation.
- It is the Lifeguards responsibility to ensure that the bather load does not exceed the ratios set out in the GSPOs. The following factors should be considered when deciding on Lifeguard/bather ratios – How many bathers are present, how many potential bathers are on deck, ability of swimmers, age groups and disabilities. Activities and programs together with the surface reflection should also be taken into consideration. Communication with the Supervisor is paramount.

Remember the 1 to 100 ratio is on the assumption that you have 100 Ian Thorpe's in your pool and you have no blind spots. It is the responsibility of the Lifeguard to alert the Supervisor of changing conditions.

## Shift Procedures

- Open Lifeguard Procedure (Handout)
- Close Lifeguard Procedure (Handout)

## **Specific Rules** (Handouts)

- Centre Equipment (such as hoist procedures)
- Recreation Equipment
- Ejection of Guests (discuss with Supervisor)
- Centre Rules
- Rotation

## **Communication**

Loudhailers:

A loudhailer can be found <<enter location>>.

P.A. System:

The P.A. can be used in emergencies and can be heard on pool deck. The EWIS system is located in the <<enter location>> and can be located by the <<enter appropriate person>>. An emergency alarm is also located at the EWIS panel, and may be triggered to evacuate the pool(s). The red phones throughout the centre enable a staff member to communicate with the Chief Warden in an emergency situation.

Radios:

There are currently <<enter number>> mobile radios in circulation. The Supervisor Lifeguards and Duty Manager communicate via these. Lifeguards and Supervisors operate on channel 1. Only use the radio for relevant issues.

## Duty Of Care

All Centre staff has a duty of care to all members and guests who use the facility.

Lifeguards have a duty to educate members and guests and can be within breach of this duty if they ignore actions such as incorrect usage of equipment or members and guests behaving inappropriately.

It can be difficult when a guest considers the behaviour of other guests to be offensive. We need a consistent way of addressing offensive behaviour.

- When do we approach a guest?
- What do we say?
- If we observe behaviour that we deem suspicious/unacceptable in nature, we must notify the Supervisor who will advise on the correct course of action.
- If we receive a complaint from a guest regarding inappropriate behaviour, we must notify the Supervisor immediately who will advise of action.
- One way we can challenge obvious behaviour is observe them from a safe distance. If they know they are being watched, they may become uncomfortable and not continue with the action or leave the Centre.
- If we see something that may be illegal, inform the Supervisor immediately and the Supervisor will contact the Duty Manager who in turn will advise the police.
- If we are informed or notice that equipment is faulty or inoperable the Supervisor must be informed and the necessary actions must be taken to ensure the safety of all members and guests.
- Reminder of proactive behavior.
- Incident reports must be completed and signed off by the Supervisor directly after the incident.

## Under 10 Policy

- Reception endeavours to ensure no child under the age of 10 years is permitted into the Centre without the active supervision of an adult (16 years and over).
- Guests, once in the Centre, may need to be educated and the direct supervision component reinforced, which any staff member can do if this is noticed.
- If there are children not supervised by an adult, please advise the Supervisor.
- A letter regarding the under 10 policy will be given to the guardian.

## First Aid (Tour)

## Lifeguard Station (Positions)

What they include:

- First Aid Kit
- Oxygen Kit
- Rescue Equipment
- Medi-Waste Containers

## Report Forms

- Incident /First Aid
- Parent Information

All forms must be completed in a black or blue pen. They are a legal document and must be kept on site for a minimum of seven years after the member, guest or staff has turned eighteen years. Please ensure that they are legible and that all sections of the forms are completed.

Supervisors must countersign all of the above forms. The Supervisor should be called to pool deck to cover the area whilst first aids are being administered. If more than one guard is on deck, another guard may cover the area at the discretion of the Supervisor

## Completion or understanding of various other forms

- BMS
- Media release

There is a standard for all the above forms. A brief explanation of each form is as follows: -

- BMS. The booking sheets are printed out the previous night. They are placed at the first aid stations for the lifeguards. You must check them regularly to ensure you have the correct signage in place. If there is a problem, please contact the Supervisor immediately.
- Media release forms. Media release forms are located at reception and guests are asked to complete them if they intend to use them whilst at the centre. However, sometimes this does not occur and therefore they are also located on the first aid stations and are to be filled out for any photography that is taking place within the centre, whether it is for personal or commercial. Once these forms are completed they are to be passed on to the Supervisor. Make sure you cover your area if you are required to assist a guest with the completion of the form.

## First Aid Rooms (Location, tour and discussion)

What it includes:

- First aid supplies store
- First aid kit
- Medical beds
- Large Medi-waste container
- Sharps container for needles

Defibrillator (where it is)

- who's qualified to use it
- when to use
- when not to use
- precautions



## **Emergency Buttons And Procedures**

### **Location of Buttons**

1. Wave Pool
4. Spa
5. Sauna/steam room

### **Location of Alarms**

The spa alarm must be reset in the main plant room by pushing the emergency button on the mechmate twice.

### **Response to Alarm (Priority Alarms)**

## **Emergency Procedures**

A copy of the emergency evacuation plan is discussed in detail. This should include the role of the wardens, contents of the evacuation kits and exits.

## Position Requirements And Performance Assessment

A copy of the Lifeguard Position Description, outlining responsibility and performance is given to all new staff and discussed to ensure they are aware of their duties and responsibilities.

All centre staff including lifeguards will be regularly assessed on their performance. The assessment can be conducted at any time. Staff will not be informed prior to assessment as they should be prepared at all times. The performance assessment may be filled out by the Supervisor, Duty Manager, Aquatic Coordinator or Manager and discussed with the Lifeguard after their shift.

Performance assessments are completed to ensure a high standard of lifeguarding is maintained. Our members and guests want to be assured of their safety and security, and staff are accountable for their actions. Performance assessments can provide a 'safety net' for legal purposes (for the Lifeguard and the Centre) in the case of any potential legal actions being logged.

## Administration

Punctuality is extremely important. If a shift starts at 9.30am the Lifeguard must be on deck at 9.30 am sharp not at 9.31am or later.

### Rosters

All shifts are based on a permanent part time and casual basis depending on your letter of offer from SSCT. They are rotated every 3 months where possible with consideration for the school and university timetables.

### Shift Durations

- The maximum duration of a Lifeguard shift is <<enter number>> hours.
- Most shifts run for four to <<enter number>> hours.
- A Lifeguard can only complete one shift per day. A 10 minute break is given for any shift over three hours at the discretion of the Supervisor, usually half way through the shift.

### Shift Changes

The shift change work instruction and the shift change form is shown and discussed. Once a staff member is rostered on a shift, the shift cover is their responsibility. If a staff member is unable to work their shift it is their responsibility to cover the shift with a suitably qualified and inducted staff member unless they are ill. If ill and unable to work, a medical certificate must be provided to the <<enter contact>> next time you attend the centre. The <<enter contact>> must also be notified if you cannot work your shift. The contact number is <<enter phone number>>.

The <<enter contact>> must record all shift variations on the master roster and include the changes in the shift report for follow up.

### Staff Room Notice Board, Communication Book And Pigeon Holes

The importance of checking notice boards and pigeon holes regularly is discussed so that the Lifeguard knows what is occurring around the Centre.

### Shift Applications

Lifeguards should take notice of when the roster starts and finishes and be aware of the following

- at least 1 month before the roster finishes an availability notice will be placed in your pigeon hole.
- a closing date for applications for shifts will be stated on the notice
- applications received after the specified date or failure to lodge an application will result in the lifeguard not being allocated a shift
- the lifeguard can cover shifts for other team members
- a lifeguard must work at least once every six weeks to remain qualified
- a lifeguard who has not worked for a period between 6 weeks and 3 months must be able to demonstrate a satisfactory level of performance and knowledge before being able to recommence duties
- if a lifeguard has not worked for more than 3 months they must re-apply again as part of the selection and recruitment process

## **Additional Training** (once Lifeguard Orientation is completed)

### Shadow L/G Shifts:

These shifts are for 3 hours each and are completed with an experienced Lifeguard. A competency checklist is completed to ensure the new lifeguard is competent to work alone. (Deck procedures for all pools will be discussed and demonstrated.)

(The Shadow shifts will be organized at the completion of the orientation.)

There are four or five compulsorily training sessions for Lifeguards each year. All lifeguards are expected to attend. If you are unable to attend you must let the <<enter contact>> know in writing 2 weeks prior. An alternative time will be arranged. Failure to do so may result in a loss of shift until such time as an alternative training session has been completed.

During the training sessions your competency will be assessed. If you cannot demonstrate your ability/skills in accordance with your lifeguard qualifications you may be de-rostered until such time that you can demonstrate the skill.

## **Supervision Guides (Should cover all “areas” of your facility)**

### **Diving Boards**

#### **Public Opening Hours**

Diving boards are open <<enter times>>. This is subject to change due to events and staffing levels required for supervision.

Diving tower usage may be affected by carnivals and events scheduled in the competition pool. A timetable is available on the lap lane availability guide at main reception.

#### **Supervision Guidelines**

Maximum height – 3 metre towers or spring boards

Always use the board closest to the tower (inside).

Stand on the other board so that you can see under the tower.

Do not sit on end of boards. Stand up and look alert.

Never run more than one 3 metre or two ½metre boards at once (per staff member).

If a group booking clashes with a public diving session then the group should use the boards as far away as possible from the public boards to reduce the risk of injury.

If at any stage the staff member supervising feels out of control, the activity should be stopped immediately.

All staff running diving activities must hold a RLSSA Pool Lifeguard Award (endorsed to a depth of 5metres) or undergo a Depth test by a Full Time Aquatic Supervisor. The staff member must prove that they can duck-dive to retrieve an object from the bottom of the pool. This test must be repeated annually. Staff who are unable to complete this task must not supervise any diving activity.

#### **Diving Board Life-guarding Positions**

<<insert diagram of Wave Pool>>



## Inflatable

### Public Opening Hours

Inflatables are opened during <<enter times>>.

This is subject to change due to events and bookings

### Supervision Guidelines

One staff member out of water supervising entry point at all times ensuring entry & side of the inflatable can be seen. Other s staff member must be in the water is responsible for exit and other side of inflatable. This is to be done at all times when open for public use or when taking a group where any member is under 10 years of age (or not confident in deep water).

Staff member in water should use a rescue tube to distance themselves from the swimmers.

The inflatable should be tied in such a way that a person could not fit between the pool deck and the inflatable.

The hose should be positioned to take the shortest possible distance across the path of customers and staff walking on deck. If the position of the hose presents a danger, it should be clearly marked with a sign.

The end of the inflatable should be tethered to the sides of the pool and the area beneath the slide must be kept clear of ropes, mats and swimmers.

Only one patron the inflatable at any time.

When a group is using the inflatable during public access the public should still be allowed to utilize the inflatable.

If the inflatable is not open to the public then the group may have exclusive use of the inflatable.

### Inflatable Life-guarding Positions

<<insert diagram of Inflatable>>



## Water Slide

### Public Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 10.00am to 9.00pm

Note: from 10am-4pm the slide is only open on demand. When a patron asks to use the slide, contact the Aquatic Supervisor to arrange a time to open the slide

Weekends and Public Holidays 10.00am to 8.00pm

Monday to Friday during School Holidays 10.00am to 9.00pm.

### Supervision Guidelines

Maximum of 20 people on the ladder at one time

Always have a staff member at the top of the slide. Wait until swimmer emerges and exits from bottom of tube before next swimmer may enter the slide.

Staff should walk through the slide with a torch prior to opening the slide for the first time that day and check for any sharp objects etc.

When a group is using the slide during the public usage hours, the public must still be given access to the slide. This should operate at a one to one procedure during busy times to ensure everyone gets an equal go.

Keep the gate closed after 20 people to stop people from queuing on the stairs. The patrons queuing at the bottom should do so at the gate and wait there until a staff member lets them onto the stairs.

### Water Slide Life-guarding Position(s)

<<insert diagram of Water Slide>>

## Wave Pool

### Public Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 10.00pm (last wave session is at 9.30pm)

Weekends and Public Holidays 7.45am to 8.00pm (last wave session is at 7.30pm)

Monday to Friday during School Holidays 8.30am to 10.00pm (last wave session is at 9.30pm)

### Supervision Guidelines

Before each wave session the following announcement must be made over the microphone: "Attention swimmers, we are about to run a wave session in this pool. For safety reasons, all children under the age of 10 years, must be actively supervised in the water by an adult. We ask that you please keep your child within arms reach at all times."

Waves run for 5 minutes every half-hour, on the hour and the half-hour e.g. 5.00pm to 5.05pm, 5.30pm to 5.35pm, 6.00pm to 6.05pm etc. Two wave sessions must be run each hour.

Due to operational constraints we cannot run the waves for longer. The selection of type of wave is done prior to the commencement of the waves and under no circumstances is the type of wave to change while the waves are running.

Staff who have programs operating outside of these times, programs which require wave pool operation, should contact the lifeguard supervisor who will arrange times for sessions. The maximum session length is 5 minutes and there must be at least 20 minutes between sessions. Staff should contact the lifeguard supervisor prior to the start of their program.

All patrons must enter and exit the wave pool from the beach entry.

The step entry on both sides of the pool must be closed with gates, prior to the waves operating and re opened after the waves have finished.

The ratio of staff to patrons when the waves are operating is 1:40 under NO circumstances should this ratio be ignored. The Aquatic Supervisor and the Duty Managers should be utilized for the wave sessions to ensure this if there is 160 patrons in the pool, you would need a minimum of 4 lifeguard staff, possibly more.



### **Wave Pool Operating Procedure & Guarding Positions:**

Sound Siren 5 minutes before wave session time and give P.A. safety announcement.

Eg. "Attention please patrons. The next wave session is about to commence. Due to safety reasons, all children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult. All parents please ensure that your children remain within arms reach at all times. The wave session will not commence until all children under the age of 10 are accompanied by an adult.

Guards should then ensure that the above conditions are met before starting the wave machine.

Guard positions are indicated on the attached diagram:

At low patronage times (under 30 patrons) one guard only is needed and should maintain position shown (allows ability to see entire pool, including toddlers pool) unless rescuing, gaining attention of patron or conducting P.A. announcement, etc.

Using two guards, Guard 2 will conduct announcement and should sound siren, etc.

At all other higher patronage times (3 Guards & over), Guard 3 will conduct announcement, etc. while other guards ensure all children under the age of 10 are accompanied by an adult.

Green arrows indicate areas of suggested movement/patrolling along pool deck to ensure overall coverage of pool area at peak times.

Guarding ratios during wave session must be 1 guard per 40 patrons. At all other times must be 1 guard per 100 patrons. Remember these are maximum ratios based on competent swimmers. If you are concerned with the level of competency of the swimmers, contact your Supervisor for backup.

### **Wave Pool Life-Guarding Positions**

<<insert diagram of Wave Pool>>