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## COASTAL AQUATIC SAFETY

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<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Community Facilities
<b>Contact Person:</b>	Manager Community Facilities
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	2 June 2020 (CE01-06/20)

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### POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Wanneroo (City) aims to provide a safe and attractive environment for the community to participate in recreational activities across City of Wanneroo (City) beaches through planning, policy and the implementation of preventative life-saving measures.

### POLICY OBJECTIVE

The policy aims to:

- Clarify the role of the City with regards to encouraging safe **coastal aquatic activity** at its beaches.
- Ensure alignment with the Australian Water Safety Framework and Surf Life Saving Western Australia (SLSWA) BeachSAFE priorities.

### SCOPE

This policy is applicable to the **coastal aquatic environment** within the City of Wanneroo and users of the City's beaches.

This policy is not applicable to other areas of the foreshore and coastline such as dunes, access tracks, car parks. Similarly, the policy does not apply to risks associated with the open ocean which is managed by the Department of Transport (tbc), or to coastal erosion which is the subject of Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning.

### IMPLICATIONS (Financial, Human Resources)

The policy will be implemented using the City's existing budget and resource allocations.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The City places a high priority on the provision of safe and rewarding visitor experiences, as well as the management of public risk at its beaches. As the environments and risk factors in which coastal aquatic incidences occur are varied, incident prevention involves support from government and non-government stakeholders as well as a degree of responsibility from the community.

Whilst the City is responsible for ensuring the long-term sustainable use of the Wanneroo coastline and can provide some guidance on permitted areas for specific recreational activities, visitors are exposed to risks by the nature of their chosen recreation. As such, the ability for each beach user to recreate safely will depend on each individual's capability, experience and familiarity with that specific beach environment.

The City will endeavour to consistently mitigate the loss of life or injury along its beaches in accordance with the SLSWA BeachSAFE principles: Supervision, Aquatic Education, First Aid and CPR and Emergency Preparedness as follows:

## **1. Supervision**

- 1.1 The City will support the provision of seasonal volunteers at Quinns Beach, Alkimos Beach and Yanchep Lagoon, paid patrols at Quinns Beach and Yanchep Lagoon and a mobile patrol service in partnership with local surf lifesaving clubs and its contracted service provider.
- 1.2 The City will continue to be responsive to changes along the coastline and seek to provide additional patrols where appropriate to meet identified needs over time.
- 1.3 The City will promote information regarding patrolled beach locations and times, and the appropriate beach locations to undertake aquatic recreation via its various communication channels.
- 1.4 Adult supervision of children within all coastal areas will need to continue to be a fundamental focus of the community.

## **2. Aquatic Education**

- 2.1 The City will continue to work with partners by taking a proactive approach to community capacity building and increasing the knowledge and skills amongst current and prospective beach visitors in Wanneroo.
- 2.2 The City will provide opportunities for community education and information by supporting SLSWA to deliver the BeachSAFE program to targeted areas within the City as required. The program aims to equip the community with the necessary skills and knowledge to recreate safely on our coastline and includes; a schools program, a culturally appropriate drowning prevention program and first aid training courses.
- 2.3 The City will improve coastal aquatic risk mitigation by increasing the reach of coastal safety messages via the City's communications channels to enable visitors to consider risks in planning their activities.
- 2.4 The City will promote other key coastal aquatic safety messages and information portals (BeachSAFE website and app, social media updates, Shark Smart, RecFish West).
- 2.5 The City will encourage beach users to check water/coastal conditions prior to using the beach for recreation purposes and where possible, use the City's beaches which are patrolled.

### **3. First Aid / CPR**

- 3.1 The City will work with relevant stakeholders as required to increase the community's confidence and skill set to provide first aid and CPR in aquatic related incidents. This includes facilitating and promoting local training and education, community first aid programs, learn to swim programs, swimming fitness programs, and surf activity and survival programs.

### **4. Emergency Preparedness**

- 4.1 The City's Coastal Management Plans and individual Foreshore Management Plans outline the overall risks which have been identified across the coastline. The City is committed to the ongoing review, assessment and implementation of the necessary mitigation strategies and will continue to monitor this on a regular basis as environments along the coastline alter.
- 4.2 The City will install and maintain Australian Standard beach signage at designated entry points to alert visitors to particular hazards. This includes static beach access signs and additional point of hazards signs associated with specific structures, facilities or natural attractions. QR codes will also be provided on beach entry signs to provide up-to-date hazard information, as well as references to the BeachSAFE app where possible.
- 4.3 The City will provide advocacy for safe participation in high risk coastal aquatic activities such as rock fishing, diving and snorkelling and promote the importance of carrying appropriate safety equipment for the chosen recreation.
- 4.4 The City is responsible for the closure of beaches if hazards are identified which could pose a risk to the community. Such incidences include; beach cleaning, unsafe beach access, coastal construction works, shark sightings or attacks, dead animals on the beach, inclement weather conditions (upon advice from SLSWA), in response to an accident or drowning incident and during other maintenance works.
- 4.5 The City has an ongoing dialogue with Land Owners along the northern coastal development front with regards to the implications of illegal 4WD access to the coastline.
- 4.6 The City will support local surf lifesaving clubs, SLSWA and it's contracted service provider to provide fast and effective beach lifeguard patrols and emergency rescue response services at City beaches as well as monitoring locations to ensure they remain consistent with identified risks and hazards.
- 4.7 The City will encourage participation in City of Wanneroo surf lifesaving clubs and completion of Community Surf Rescue Certificate amongst high risk groups to increase emergency response capacity.
- 4.8 Where required, and subject to resource availability, the City will work with SLSWA and local surf lifesaving clubs to support their emergency response preparedness.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Community and Place Directorate will take lead responsibility for this policy. However, other internal and external stakeholders such as SLSWA will play a key role in the delivery of specific actions.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION

All disputes in regard to this policy will be referred to the Manager Community Facilities in the first instance. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached, the matter will be submitted to Director Community and Place for review.

## EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROVISIONS

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in accordance with any legislative, legal or risk changes prior to this date.

## DEFINITIONS

*DEFINITIONS: Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only.*

<i>Coastal aquatic activity</i>	<i>Refers to activities specifically undertaken in the beach setting such as swimming, snorkelling, scuba-diving, fishing etc. This does not include other recreational activities associated with the coastline, foreshore or open ocean.</i>
<i>Coastal aquatic environment</i>	<i>Refers solely to the beach area and waters managed by the City. Does not include other areas of the foreshore and coastline such as dunes, access tracks, car parks, groynes and open ocean etc.</i>

## RELEVANT POLICIES/MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS OR DELEGATIONS

City of Wanneroo Coastal Management Plan  
 City of Wanneroo Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaption Policy  
 City of Wanneroo Foreshore Management Plans (Various)  
 City of Wanneroo Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law 2015

## REFERENCES

National Coastal Safety Report (Surf Life Saving Australia, 2018)  
 Australian Water Safety Strategy (Australian Water Safety Council, 2016-2020)

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Manager Community Facilities

Version	Next Review	Record No:
7 November 2016 – CP01-11/16	November 2019	16/280596
June 2020	June 2023	16/280596V02

