

## **STOCKTON SURF LIFESAVING CLUB POLICY**

<b>Policy Name</b>	Member Surf Safety Policy
<b>Policy Number</b>	1.01
<b>Endorsed</b>	February 2018

### **Part 1 – MEMBER SURF SAFETY POLICY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Stockton Surf Lifesaving Club (SSLSC) is an affiliated entity of Hunter Surf Lifesaving (HSLC Branch), Surf Lifesaving New South Wales (SLSNSW) and Surf Lifesaving Australia (SLSA) and is committed to the health and safety of the public and importantly our members. We are dedicated to providing a safe environment for the public and those participating in Surf Lifesaving activities and events.

In alignment with our main objectives of community safety at the beach, we nurture our members and importantly our junior members in an environment that values trust, respect, caring and responsibility. This is crucial to the wellbeing of our members in the surf environment, for their own safety in the first instance, and to undertake their role as a Surf Lifesaver in rendering assistance to others in the beach environment.

#### **1.2 POLICY AIMS AND RATIONALE**

This Policy aims to give members a clear understanding of the technical requirements involved in maintaining member safety in the surf environment. Particular application is intended for inexperienced members who may be under the instruction of experienced educators or facilitators in those environments.

The Policy will give clear guidance on the resourcing, rationale and delivery of surf safety by educators or facilitators in the surf environment and the expectations of members, parents or caregivers when under instruction.

### **PART 2 – MEMBER SURF SAFETY POLICY**

#### **2.1 APPLICATION**

The surf environment can be a dangerous place for inexperienced members and public swimmers. More specifically the wave zone poses a significantly higher risk that injury might occur. This is particularly apparent for junior members (Nippers) or inexperienced adult members (senior members). In order to mitigate this risk for senior members, the club provides a range of training and qualification opportunities including the Bronze Medallion where surf skills and equipment use is taught.

For junior members, similar training is delivered but in a more structured, age appropriate way; through the Nippers Program. At Nippers, junior members are able to use equipment such as boards to learn and maintain their skills to be able to paddle the board in the surf environment and how to safely negotiate the surf/wave zone.

These skills are taught by senior members who have a strong ability to conduct the skills being taught, significant levels of experience and are recognised by the Club for their skill level. Senior members who fulfil the position of educators or facilitators for Nippers or inexperienced adult members, are required to hold current qualifications and training as follows:

- Membership of Stockton Surf Lifesaving Club for a suitable number of years of which they are known to Club officials
- NSW Children's Guardian Working With Children Check (WWCC)
- Surf Lifesaving Bronze Medallion or Surf Rescue Certificate (at minimum)
- SLSA/SLSNSW Age Managers Accreditation
- Nippers Program Facilitator and Age Manager Induction
- A number of years' experience, as deemed suitable by the committee, of skills transfer in the surf environment

## **2.2 MEMBER EXPECTATION**

During the delivery of skills transfer, members can expect that the facilitator will be delivering competency appropriate information and that member safety is their highest priority. When the facilitator is in the water/immediate environment with the member(s) it is reasonable to expect the facilitator will:

- Physically handle the individual in any circumstance where necessary to deliver the skill or maintain safety.
- Move the individual to reposition on a board or to negotiate a wave.
- Push the individual onto waves, into waves or away from imminent risks of injury whilst on a board
- Assist in all aspects involved with riding waves on a board and surf swimming.
- When paddling a board, physical handling is conducted by holding the board rails or straps where appropriate rather than the individual. However, often for safety, including rescues, the technique taught to individuals is for the rescuer/teacher to be positioned at the back of the board and by placing their chest on the lower trunk and legs of the learner/patient, secures them to the board and enables the rescuer/teacher to paddle to catch the waves.

Members can expect that facilitators will relay information relative to the expectations above to members at the beginning and throughout the skills transfer session. This includes any changes to the way the session is conducted and level of involvement of the facilitator.

## **2.3 CLUB EXPECTATION**

The Club expects that members understand and acknowledge that the highest priority for facilitators is member safety during any skills transfer session. With safety as the highest priority the Club expects that members:

- Understand the aim of this policy and that the Policy intent is relayed by parents/caregivers to junior members where appropriate
- Understand what is involved in skills transfer sessions for both senior members and juniors at Nippers sessions
- Understand that it is preferable to wear a wetsuit or rash-shirt and shorts while in the early learning stages, as this will protect the member against board rash, and also give the facilitator clothing to hold in the event they need to quickly re-position the individual on the board for safety or manoeuvre the individual in the surf environment.

## **2.4 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

If at any time the member feels the expectations outlined in this policy above have not been met, they may initiate a formal grievance under the SLSA Grievance Policy 6.06, which is available at the following link <http://www.stocktonsurfclub.com/publications-documents/Grievance-Procedure.pdf>

## **2.5 POLICY ENQUIRIES**

If you wish to discuss the Policy further please contact the Club President in the first instance by email: [president@stocktonsurfclub.com](mailto:president@stocktonsurfclub.com)