

Safety Manual

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1. GENERAL

MISSION STATEMENT

To facilitate consultation and co-operation between branches in initiating, developing and implementing measures designed to ensure safety at all sailing events.

INTRODUCTION

Safety by definition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary means “Being safe, freedom from all danger or risks”.

It is intended that all members of Sailability and associated organisations have an important advisory role. Their active involvement in assessing, helping design and implement safety standards will be encouraged.

An organisation with an active ongoing participation based safety programme will have reduced the risk of accident situations occurring.

SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

Responsibilities

Responsibility is a duty which is shared by all involved in any on-water activity.

It is the duty of all staff, instructors, carers and volunteers to be vigilant and aware of all circumstances that may affect the safety of both themselves and others.

It is the duty of all persons involved to notify the Supervisor of any situation or circumstance that concerns them, or that they feel may affect the safety of any person. This must be done as soon as possible, and then confirmed in writing.

DUTY OF CARE VS DIGNITY OF RISK

Duty of Care refers to “the obligation to take responsible care to avoid injury to a person whom it can be reasonably foreseen, might be injured by an act or omission”. In addition to having fun, volunteers should be alert to potential hazardous situation.

Dignity of Risk refers to the ability of a person to decide to take a “Safe” risk. Dignity of Risk is acknowledging a person can make their own choices, ie although a decision may look risky to you as the volunteer, the person making the choice knows exactly what they are doing.

PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Communication with sailors is of primary importance. “*Ask the Sailor*” Do they have special problems that could affect either their own safety, or the safety of others?

Attention should be given to any person who may have special needs and not be personally aware of the dangers of hypothermia and heat exhaustion. Certain sailors may have no sensory feeling of "cold" or "hot", or be unaware of the meaning of that feeling. Similarly, some sailors find it difficult to judge their stamina accurately. All persons with responsibility must be alert to these potential dangers.

Some sailors have little or no sensation in various areas of the body. To protect feet and legs from bruising, pressure spots or scrapes, it is important that sailors have their feet and legs protected eg. Wear shoes and/or socks.

For further information on symptoms, instruction techniques and implications for sailing, refer to Sailability's Disability Awareness Manual.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

Occupational Health and Safety is a shared responsibility of all Sailability members and volunteers. Everyone should be familiar with the Sailability Safety Manual and ensure these guidelines are followed.

Objectives

1. To create a safe and healthy place in which to conduct Sailability events.
2. To establish and maintain policy, procedures and a program which will support the development, implementation and maintenance of a safe and healthy venue.
3. To demonstrate Sailability's commitment to the health and safety of all participants and volunteers.

Principles

1. It is the right of all participants and volunteers to have a safe and healthy venue to conduct Sailability events.
2. Health and safety is an individual and a shared responsibility.
3. Good management principles and practices operating normally within the workplace constitute a sound basis from which a successful Occupational Health and Safety program can develop.
4. A safe and healthy venue promotes a more secure, productive environment.

Volunteers need to be provided with adequate training to perform assigned tasks.
Refer Volunteer Manual – Training Section.

Before performing any task the following questions should be considered:

- * Is this task safe for my own well being and that of the sailor ?
- * Is there a safer way to perform the task ?
- * Do I need assistance to perform the task ?

2. SUN SMART POLICY

The NSW Cancer Council recommends the following guidelines be considered when holding any outdoor activity. As all Sailability events occur in direct sunlight it is imperative for administrators at all levels of our organisation be aware of, and actively address the following issues.

SUITABLE CLOTHING

- One of the most effective ways to limit UV radiation to the skin is by wearing protective clothing.
- Ensure that T-shirts are of the collared design. Consider longer sleeves (elbow length is a good compromise).
- The closeness of the weave is particularly important, not the weight of the fabric. A simple way to get some indication of protection or to compare fabrics is to hold them up to the light. The less light coming through or the harder it is to see through, the better the protection.
- Be aware that darker colours tend to absorb more heat than lighter colours and can be less comfortable in hot weather.

Hats

Hats should be part of your Sailability uniform. Different styles of hats provide varying levels of protection from the sun.

- Baseball caps offer little protection to the ears, neck and cheeks.
- Broad Brimmed Hats protect the face, ears and back of the neck. They should have a minimum brim width of 8 – 10 cm for adults, 6 cm for children. The underside of the brim should be a dark colour to reduce the amount of UV radiation reflected on to the face.
- Legionnaire Caps protect the ears and neck, but leave much of the face, especially the cheeks exposed. They should have a front peak of a minimum of 6cm and a one-piece back-flap. They should not have velcro, clips or press studs for raising the flap.



Sunglasses

Sailors (including children) should be encouraged to wear sunglasses at all times. UV protection does not necessarily relate to the cost of the sunglasses. For maximum protection choose sunglasses that:

- meet Australian Standard 1067
- offer 99% protection from UV rays
- are close fitting, wrap-around style

Sunscreen

At all Sailability events, sunscreen should be available to volunteers and members.

Sunscreen will assist in blocking damaging UV rays to exposed skin. Sunscreen should be used as an adjunct to the natural protection of wearing a hat, sunglasses, collared shirts with long sleeves and using shade where available and keeping out of direct sunlight as much as possible.

Choosing a sunscreen

- Choose a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) number of 15+.
- Labelled “broad spectrum”.
- Water resistant

Applying sunscreen - Sunscreen should be applied according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

- Apply liberally at least 15 minutes before going out in the sun.
- Apply to clean, dry skin.
- Reapply regularly.

Shade

Be aware - even if adequate shade is available at your venue, UV rays will reflect off nearby water, concrete, sand and grass.

As well as the publicised risks caused to the skin by over-exposure to the sun, many people with disabilities have medical conditions affected by heat and sunlight. Every precaution possible should be taken to ensure that all participants have adequate protection from the sun.

Make maximum use of natural shade. If none is available at your venue, the Sailability committee should seriously consider alternative options. eg

- A portable shade cabana can be purchased for several hundred dollars and will provide some shade.
- Permanent shade structures, although more expensive, are more appropriate. Investigate making an application through your Local Council to obtain government capital works funding.

3. FIRST AID AND ACCIDENTS

The Supervisor of any Sailability event must ensure that first aid equipment is on hand and complete, and that its location is accessible and known to all persons. The Supervisor should ensure that a trained first-aid person with a valid certificate is available at an event.

If an accident occurs full details should be entered, as soon as possible, on the Accident Form and sent to the Branch committee. It is the duty of all persons to ensure that any accident is reported.

All Sailability venues should formulate an Emergency Procedure Plan (EPP) and specific Risk Management Manual for your branch.

FIRST AID

It is recommended a First Aid Officer be appointed at each Sailability event. This Officer should hold current First Aid qualification from a recognised organisation eg St. Johns Ambulance Association or The Red Cross Society. All members of Sailability are encouraged to obtain current CPR certificates.

General Duties of a First Aid Officer

1. Disperse and control items from the First Aid Kits / Cabinets.
2. Ensure supplies are adequate.
3. Treat minor wounds and injuries with applicable dressings, stop bleeding and treat burns.
4. Deal with fits and fainting.
5. Resuscitation
6. Hypothermia
7. Recording accident/injury details and advising the Supervisor.
8. Arranging further assistance if necessary.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE PLAN (EPP)

Each venue should be assessed and an Emergency Procedure Plan incorporated into your Risk Management Manual. All participants, especially Supervisors and volunteers should be well drilled in emergency procedures. Details of the EPP should be incorporated in all volunteer training courses (refer to Sailability Volunteer Training Manual).

Points to consider

- Location of nearest telephone (if no phone available, a mobile phone should be on site)
- Location of fire extinguishers
- Visual and audible signals calling all craft back to shore in case of emergency
- Vehicular access to Sailability event site at all times for emergency services
- Location of First Aid Kit
- Radio communication between safety boat and shore
- Designated shore marshalling area at times of emergency
- Several people trained to be “Safety Officer of the Day” ensuring correct procedures are implemented at each Sailability event.

- A Register names of all sailors on the water at any given time
- Be aware of specific medical conditions which may require attention eg epilepsy, diabetes, heart condition etc. (Refer to Sailability’s Disability Awareness Manual)
- All persons should be aware of “Universal Precautions” Guidelines with relation to protection when working with possibly infectious body fluid (Refer to Sailability’s Volunteer Training Manual)

Implementation of EPP

The Supervisor (or Safety Officer of the Day) has the responsibility of activating the EPP and allocating various tasks to responsible personnel.

On-water Emergency

1. Safety boat personnel to immediately alert shore personnel by radio of emergency.
2. The Signal to “return immediately to shore” should be sounded (and displayed).
3. Safety boat to aid persons requiring emergency assistance.
4. Safety boat to continue to assist others return to shore.
5. Continue with the following procedures

Medical Emergencies – Fire Emergencies - Accidents

The Supervisor (or Safety Officer of the Day) should assess the situation, taking into consideration:

- Injuries sustained
- Possible danger to others
- Further help required – fire brigade, ambulance, police etc.
- Damage to equipment
- Assess fire situations

The Supervisor (or Safety Officer) allocates the following tasks to responsible personnel:

Marshall – responsible for assembling all people not involved in the emergency to the pre-arranged marshalling area and ensuring all participants’ location is known.

First Aid Officer – Assist any persons requiring assistance

Assistant 1

Contact Emergency Services – with concise description of location & type of emergency

Assistant 2

Ensure clear access to site

Assistant 3

Direct Emergency Services to site – to go to the closest road and give directions to Emergency Services of location of emergency site.

4. PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

There are many types and variety of buoyancy aids available, manufactured to different sets of standards. These include appliances for use by commercial vessels required by law to meet SOLAS or USL Code standards. The Australian Standards for Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) are appropriate for recreational boating activities

The PFD is a personal item of safety equipment, designed specifically to assist in preserving a person's life when in the water. Simply owning and carrying a PFD is no guarantee of safety, unless you know how to use it. You and your passengers should always practice putting the equipment on before you leave the shore. Non-swimmers and children should wear one at all times whilst on, or near, water. It is extremely difficult to don a PFD in the water. PFD's should also be stowed in a location where they can be accessible and quickly distributed. PFD's are subject to normal wear and tear. Each one should be checked regularly and if in doubt about its serviceability it should be replaced. If they become wet from salt water they should be hosed down with fresh water and allowed to dry. The addition of talcum powder will also assist in reducing the possibility of mildew forming.

SELECTING A PFD

A PFD provides buoyancy to help you float with your head above the water. There are three different Australian Standards for PFD's according to the level of protection afforded to the wearer. Sailability recommends PFD Type 1 or 2 be used for all Sailability events.

- PFD Type 1 complying with the requirements of AS 1512 provides a high level of buoyancy and is designed to maintain the wearer in a safe floating position. They are required for use in pleasure vessels which may venture beyond sheltered waters. PFD Type 1 were previously referred to as "lifejackets".
- PFD Type 2 complying with the requirements of AS 1499 provides sufficient buoyancy to assist the wearer to maintain his or her head above the water but not as much as a PFD Type 1. A PFD Type 2 is generally recommended for use by dinghy sailors, board sailors, water skiers and other people who are at risk of short term immersion in sheltered waters. PFD Type 2 were previously know as "buoyancy vests".
- PFD Type 3 complying with the requirements of AS 2260, provides a similar amount of buoyancy to that of a PFD Type 2, but PFD Type 3 are permitted to carry a wider range of colours. PFD Type 3 includes buoyant wetsuits and PFDs in fashion colours. PFD Type 3 are generally recommended for use by water skiers. PFD Type 3 were previously known as "buoyancy garments".

A PFD which bears the applicable Standards Mark has been manufactured to comply with the appropriate Australian Standard.

A Word of Caution

A PFD will help you to float in the water, but it cannot guarantee your safety and ultimate rescue. Points to be remembered:

1. PFD's are manufactured in a range of sizes to suit people of different body masses and builds;

2. The effectiveness of a PFD is considerably reduced in rough or breaking seas and surf;
3. In the event of a swamping or capsizing remain with your vessel as this will be more easily found by rescue services;
4. The chilling effect of submersion in cold water for an extended period (hypothermia) saps the body's reserves of strength and can ultimately be fatal;
5. Wear your PFD in a seaway, if this is not practicable, store it in a readily accessible place. When taking others aboard your vessel ensure that there are sufficient PFDs for everybody and that all know how to find their PFD and how to put it on.

PFDs and Children

A properly designed PFD of the correct size will keep a child's mouth and nose clear of the water. A child should be taught how to put on a device and should be allowed to try it out in the water. It is important that the child feels comfortable and knows what the PFD is for and how it functions.

Further information on PFDs and Australian Standards may be obtained by contacting the appropriate Standards Australia office.

Non-Approved Jackets

Some lifejackets carry approval ratings from overseas countries as life jackets or personal flotation devices etc. The regulations requiring leisure craft to carry Australian approved jackets is an attempt to protect the public from many inferior products.

Choosing a PFD

When choosing a PFD, look for the following features:

- The Standards Australia "Standards Mark"
- Fit and comfort – to work properly, the PFD must fit correctly and securely.
- Two highly desirable features on any jacket, and especially on those for children, are an adjustable crotch strap and a lifting or towing strop.
- Flotation – the buoyancy capacity should be adequate for the sailor's body weight. PFDs are manufactured to suit four body mass ranges:

10 – 20 kg
15 – 30 kg
25 – 40 kg
35 kg and over

- Style – an attractive style will encourage people to wear PFDs.
- A kapok filled Mae West style PFD is very cumbersome to wear.

Other PFD's styled more along the lines of a vest are not only more convenient to wear routinely but can keep the occupant warmer both in and out of the water. They are often chosen for activities where occasional immersion is expected.

The ultimate solution from the wearer convenience viewpoint is offered by some of the inflatable PFD's. Although they can be inflated orally, more are inflated manually by pulling a toggle which releases gas stored in a small disposable cylinder. Good quality

inflatables are highly reliable and offer the minimum hindrance to the wearer before inflation, both in and out of the water. Inflatables also offer far more versatility in the water than other PFD's.

Inflatables are specifically prohibited under Australian Standard, as far as children's PFD's are concerned. Obviously a small child cannot be relied upon to operate a manual inflation PFD.

Compared with some overseas standards Australian Standard PFD's are not as buoyant and they are not, in fact designed to be used in rough water.

PFD Skills

All water users should experience the wearing of PFDs and develop the skills required for:

- Putting on a PFD on land or in water
- Sharing a PFD as a flotation support
- Getting in and out of water and into a rubber raft or dinghy while wearing a PFD.

5. SAILING ACTIVITIES

GENERAL

- A suitably qualified person should be nominated to authorise on-water activities, taking into account the actual and forecast weather conditions. Refer to Sailability's Volunteer Manual – Training Section for task allocation procedure, job descriptions, training etc.
- Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) must be worn by all persons when afloat. PFD Type 1 or 2 complying with the Australian Standard are recommended. Refer Section 4.
- The sailing area should be clearly defined and known to all afloat. The safety boat should be able to view the entire sailing area at all times.
- There should be a simple signal for all boats to return to shore, which is known by all afloat.
- The safety of sailors and volunteers must be considered at all time. If weather conditions alter, sails are to be reefed accordingly, or if necessary activities cancelled should conditions prove unsafe.

SAFETY BOAT

- When dinghies are sailed a safety boat must be on the water at all times, with at least two crew on board, one of whom holds a suitable boat licence. Generally a safety boat should not provide cover for more than eight dinghies, but prevailing conditions must be taken into account.
- Safety boats should carry a first aid kit and MUST be equipped with radio communication to the shore.
- In all planing powerboats, a kill cord should be fitted and used.
- All persons in the safety boat must wear an approved buoyancy aid.
- All safety boat personnel should be instructed on how to reef sails.
- If an Access Dinghy needs to be towed, it is safer and easier to tie the dinghy close alongside and if necessary remove the joystick so that the dinghy cannot be “steered” in the wrong direction.

6. ACCESSDINGHY SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

From the manufacturer

Access Dinghies are designed with a hull form and other features which combine to give considerable stability. There needs to be a set of rules which we must follow to continue our excellent safety record and prevent any accidents. The stability of Access 2.3 and 303 Dinghies is reliant upon the following factors.

- **SEATING** - Because the placement of sailor's weight affects stability it is important that people remain seated low in the boat. We therefore, have to look at using quick release velcro straps to hold them in place, provided the keel is locked fully down.
- **CENTREBOARDS** - It is most important that the keel be fully down when sailing. The hole 1/3 down the keel is there purely to facilitate sailing off a beach, *and under no circumstances should people with disabilities be allowed to sail around with the keel held in this position.* There is provision to lock the keel fully down so as even in a "knock down" it remains in place. It is imperative that the locking pin be inserted whenever the boat is used. Invariably people sailing the electric boat need to be strapped into it. Never strap someone into a boat unless the centreboard locking pin is inserted through the c/b handle.
- **REEFING** - Being a displacement type hull extra sail area in strong winds does not mean more speed, all it does is bury the boat in the water and make it more difficult to handle. In a breeze it is always better to reef to suit the stronger gusts.

If an Access Dinghy needs to be towed, it is safer and easier to tie the dinghy close alongside and if necessary remove the joystick so that the dinghy cannot be "steered" in the wrong direction.

A pontoon system which will take care of the off the beach keel handling and transferring problems has been designed.

People with disabilities need the keel down and because many are unable to raise and lower the keel to improve sailing performance and also unable to adjust the size of the sail by reefing it is discriminatory to allow abler bods to make these adjustments during a race.

7. CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Sailability NSW Branches recognise that, in the event of a critical incident occurring, its responsibility to support those involved with the program at the time of the incident.

Sailability NSW Branches will ensure that all critical incidents are recorded.

Definition:

A critical incident is an event that is out of the ordinary and is perceived by an individual as threatening and traumatic.

Examples may include: Death, Injury, Fire, Assault or Damage.

The Sailing Coordinator of the day will report every critical incident and any persons involved will have the option of participating in debriefing.

Debriefing

Debriefing is a formal process following a critical incident that benefits those involved in the incident. Debriefing is usually a single consultation that may or may not lead to referral for other counselling or action.

All members of the program, volunteers, family, carers and visitors while involved with Sailability and others who may from time to time be present during a critical incident may be offered support and counselling from an accredited psychologist / social worker. Counselling is optional and may be requested by any individual involved in the incident, or the President.

CRITICAL INCIDENT PROCEDURES

The Sailing Officer at the time of the incident shall become the Incident Contact Person.

Ensure all persons are safe from further harm.

Notify relevant bodies and contact:

Member -	nominated next of kin.
Volunteer -	Sailing Officer/President.
Sailing Officer -	President/Executive Member.

The Incident Contact Person will be responsible for recording the critical incident and ensuring all relevant documentation is filled out.

Debriefing should occur within 24 hours of the incident.

The President will be available to support those undertaking debriefing both before and after any session.

The President will provide follow-up liaison with relevant bodies and make appointments for external support if considered necessary.

The President will meet with all members/volunteers to advise them of the incident, outcomes and support strategies in place.

All incidents will be recorded in the Incident Report Form.

The report will be a full detail of the incident and shall include:

- ⇒ Date and time of the incident,
- ⇒ Those present at the time of the incident,
- ⇒ What damage was incurred as a result of the incident,
- ⇒ A record of any eye-witness accounts to the incident and any events leading to the incident or resulting from the incident,
- ⇒ Any relevant bodies contacted,
- ⇒ What follow-up processes were initiated at the time of the incident or soon after.

- The report will be signed by the Sailing Officer and submitted to the President.
- The President will be required to sign the Incident Report form and forward this to the Executive Committee for action.
- The President will take responsibility for ensuring the incident is fully investigated.
- The Sailability Branch Committee will be responsible for continually monitoring critical incidents and reporting any trends.
- The Sailability Branch Committee will review reports, gain feedback and implement preventative strategies.
- In the event of a critical incident occurring whilst a member/volunteer is involved in any activity on behalf of the Sailability Branch, the member/volunteer must complete a Critical Incident Report.

ACCIDENT / INJURY REPORT



DESCRIPTION OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Date of accident _____

Place where accident occurred _____

Supervisors name _____

Injured persons name, address and phone number _____

Describe how accident occurred _____

Describe any injury incurred _____

Name & address of doctor if consulted _____

Name, address & phone no. of Witness _____

Was any property/equipment damaged ? _____

Did the accident involve injury to any other people ? _____

If so what is/are their name/s and address/s _____

Were any Safety Directions or requirements being infringed ? _____

If so, give details. _____

Corrective action taken/recommended _____

Signed

Date

Supervisor

Date

8. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Occupational Health & Safety Committees Manual, 2nd Edition

Planning Occupational Safety and Health, 2nd Edition

Health and Safety At Work - John Mathews

Occupational Health and Safety Organisations in Australia

Australian Yachting Federation 1993-1997 Yacht Racing

Integration Kit - NSW Sports Council for the Disabled Inc.

Sailability Victoria Branch Manual