

Beach Wheelchair Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to assist Surf Life Saving Clubs and their members to assist those who wish to use a beach wheelchair. These guidelines will cover the relevant information for Surf Life Saving Clubs that store, maintain or assist the public in the use of a beach access wheelchair.

If the beach wheelchair at your club is owned by council, you will need to ensure that the club and council are clear on their respective area of responsibility under these guidelines. This includes:

- risk management
- insurance coverage
- beach wheelchair hire process (induction, pre/post check, monitoring, booking forms etc)
- ongoing beach wheelchair maintenance
- risk waiver forms.

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Things to consider before buying or receiving a beach wheelchair

- Who will be the likely users (members and/or public) and how often?
- Where will the wheelchair be stored and how accessible is this space?
- Can the equipment be accessed without assistance from the club?
- What are the maintenance needs and maintenance frequency? Is there a cost involved?
- Consider how you will mitigate risks that come with owning a wheelchair.
- Consider what resources are already currently available within the community, both internal and external to surf lifesaving.
- Does the club need, or have, relevant matting for the beach wheelchair to be used?
- What type of beach wheelchair best suits your club's beach environment?
- When and how will the beach wheelchair be available to members/the public?
- What happens if an accident occurs?
- Does your club have Beach Wheelchair policies and procedures in place?

Clubs must have the current Chair Usage Guideline specific to the make/model for each beach wheelchair they own (the chair provider will have these available). A proposed user/hirer must read and agree to these before use. SLSNSW suggests clubs have the user guide on hand for the user/hirer to read through and understand before usage. This may include a demonstration of proper wheelchair usage.

Information on the most common beach wheelchairs:

1. [Sandpiper/Sand Cruiser](#) (sometimes called Freewheeler)
2. [Hippocampe](#)
3. [Water Wheels](#) (also called a [Mobi Chair](#))

If the club owns the wheelchair SLSNSW strongly recommends that the club provides resources/volunteers to help the user access the appropriate information on operating the beach wheelchair safely. If there is a partnership with council an agreement should be in place to determine roles and responsibility of each party.

Storage Recommendations

- Easily accessible with appropriate space nearby to allow transfer to and from the wheelchair
- Low risk of vandalism – ability to lock up the storage
- Sheltered, dry and minimised risk of damage to the chair
- Council lifeguards have access/a key/understanding of booking process (if applicable).

If the wheelchair is an asset owned by the club, it is recommended that the club contacts its insurance provider to declare any information related to beach wheelchair usage and ownership. Many clubs use JLT/Marsh as their insurance provider – contact the [development team](#) if you need support in this process.

Risk management

Risks related accident/injury need to be considered and managed as the club may be considered liable for any accidents.

Your club should this to its risk register and devise a risk management plan to ensure that the club has identified and is prepared for any risks associated.



Clubs should have clear beach wheelchair information and usage guidelines available for hirers/users to read and understand their responsibilities.

The [SLSA Insurance programme](#) covers beach wheelchair access and use, on the basis adequate training is undertaken by the club and club members and guidelines made available to hirers/users. This training may be offered by beach wheelchair suppliers, by external providers (such as Push Mobility), by skilled professionals or in conjunction with beach wheelchair users. Clubs must provide detailed chair operation guidelines, which are supplied by the beach wheelchair provider.

Your club should utilise a waiver form (example below or a similar alternative) which would be completed by the beach wheelchair user (or guardian/carer) as it provides key information on their responsibilities when using the chair.

It is also recommended that the appropriate SLSA forms be utilised including:

1. The SLSA Patrol Log (or equivalent), to record when users access the beach wheelchair
2. The SLSA Incident Log, to record any incidents that may occur with the beach wheelchair

NB: If SLSA Members are involved with assisting in chair usage, it is important to log these names.



Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk for the use of Beach Wheelchairs

Please read this declaration and familiarise yourself with the safe use and care of the chair.

Safety:

- Although the beach wheelchair is designed for use on beach sand, it is less maneuverable than a regular wheelchair and requires additional pushing effort. Please exercise **caution** when pushing the wheelchair across soft sand or along uneven terrain.
- The user cannot operate the chair alone. It will be necessary for someone to push the chair.
- Depending on the size and weight of the individual using the chair and the type of sand it is used on, it may be necessary for more than one person to assist in pushing the chair.
- Please do NOT place an occupied chair near rough surf as the possibility of unpredictable wave action could place the chair occupant in danger.
- Sharp objects can puncture the tyres on the chair. Please do NOT use the chair if a tyre becomes deflated or if the chair becomes damaged in any way.
- Please hose off the wheels with fresh water after use on the beach. Please ask a lifesaver for assistance with this and to stow the chair after use.
- Please seek further advice from lifesavers regarding beach conditions and use of the chair.

Waiver:

- I have **read** the information above and **understand** that a beach wheelchair possesses characteristics that are different from a conventional wheelchair.
- I have **inspected** the chair and find it to be in proper working condition. While in my possession I will take proper measures to care for the chair and will return it in like condition.
- I **understand** that improper use of this chair will NOT be covered by insurance and may result in damage to property, injury and in most serious cases death or disability.
- By signing this waiver, I **understand** the operation of the wheelchair and assume all risks associated with its operation. I **acknowledge** that the beach poses many dangers including prevailing conditions and other forces of nature which are often unpredictable. I **acknowledge** that use of the wheelchair is at **my own risk** and that it is my responsibility to determine the suitability of use.
- I **release and forever discharge** SLS from all Claims that I may have or may have had arising from or in connection with my use of the wheelchair.
- I **indemnify and hold harmless and will keep indemnified** SLS to the extent permitted by law in respect of any Claim by any person arising as a result of or in connection with my use of the wheelchair.

In this declaration:

SLS means Surf Life Saving Australia (**SLSA**), Surf Life Saving NSW, the Surf Life Saving Club providing the wheelchair (**SLSC**) and the Surf Life Saving Branch of which the SLSC is a member.

Claim means and includes any action, suit, proceeding, claim, demand, damage, penalty, cost or expense however arising.

Privacy:

I understand that the information obtained by SLS is for the purposes of record management and to monitor the use of the beach wheelchair. All information obtained will be dealt with in accordance with the SLSA Privacy Policy 6.02 which is available via the SLSA website.

Details of hirer, or if under 18 years of age details of guardian/carer:

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	



Surf Life Saving Beach Wheelchair Booking Form

You may also wish to consider an online booking form

Club Name:

Date(s) Required:	
Time(s) Required:	
SLS Member:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Name of person accepting responsibility for the hire of the Beach Wheelchair:	
Mobile Number:	
Email:	
Licence or Identification Number: (eg. Drivers Licence, passport etc)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Please tick to confirm that identification of the above has been cited by the SLS member / lifeguard responsible for the hire.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Please tick to confirm that the 'Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk for Beach Wheelchair' has been signed by person accepting responsibility for the hire.

Name of the SLS Member / lifeguard responsible for the hire:	
Signature:	
Name of the SLS Member / lifeguard responsible for receiving the hire:	
Signature:	

Beach Wheelchair return checklist	
The SLS member or lifeguard responsible for receiving the hire should check the following:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Beach Wheelchair has been returned in a timely manner, as per the booking form
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Beach Wheelchair has been returned in good working order
<input type="checkbox"/>	The wheels of the Beach Wheelchair have been hosed off with fresh water
<input type="checkbox"/>	The beach wheelchair has been appropriately stored
If no, please specify:	

Wheelchair Maintenance Log

SLNSW suggest clubs follow the instructions from the relevant wheelchair manufacturers regarding maintenance. However, the following maintenance checklist can be used monthly for those chairs without specific maintenance instructions

	Completed by	Date	Wheels and Axis	Pins	Brake	Frame	Tyres	Other Notes	Required Actions	Signature
January										
February										
March										
April										
May										
June										
July										
August										
September										
October										
November										
December										

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