



Department of
Education

SAILING AND SAIL BOARDING

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SAILING AND SAIL BOARDING

This document contains specific requirements related to sailing and sail boarding activities and must be read in conjunction with the *Outdoor Education Activities Procedures and General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures)*.

BACKGROUND

Sailing, sail boarding and wind surfing activities are conducted by schools in a variety of locations, ranging from potentially high-risk areas such as the ocean, to lower risk areas such as lakes, rivers and other inland water bodies.

Guidance

- *Sailing – a voyage or excursion in a vessel propelled by sails.*
- *Sail boarding – sailing standing up on a sailboard that is equipped with a mast, sail, and wishbone boom.*
- *Closed water – a controlled water environment (still or slow moving) or sheltered water with a low swell (e.g. swimming pool, sheltered coastal area or river, dam, waterhole or inland water)*
- *Open water – an uncontrolled water environment that may be fast flowing or turbulent (white water) such as surf beach, tidal coastal water, flowing river or waterway*
- *Fixed location – within 1km of a safe landing point.*
- *Non-fixed location – more than 1km (but not greater than 5km) of a safe landing point.*

ENVIRONMENT

The suitability of the location is determined after considering each student's capacity, skills and experience, the planned activities, and the supervision required.

Each aquatic environment is unique, and open water environments can be more hazardous than closed water environments.

Strong winds can differ from location to location (e.g. on open versus closed water and/or sailing on smooth or partially smooth water environment). Activities must not occur:

- if strong wind or gale warnings are current; and/or
- more than 5km from a safe landing point.

The weather forecast must be checked before and also regularly throughout the activity, as it might be necessary to cancel, modify or relocate the activity at any time. If weather conditions deteriorate and become unfavourable, all participants must return to shore immediately.

Sailing activities must not occur when strong (or more severe) wind warnings are forecast.

If sailing in ocean and estuarine environments, checks should be made with regard to shark sightings or alerts in the area of use. The activity may need to be postponed, modified or another location sought. If a shark alert is current for the area then the Department's employee in charge can check current shark sightings using the [Beachsafe Smartphone](#)

App, Shark Patrol App or the Department of Fisheries. Refer also, to the SLSWA Twitter feed of surf locations and shark sightings.

The activity must be cancelled immediately if a shark warning alert is sounded.

Guidance

Where practical, the Department employee in charge is to have first-hand knowledge of the venue (see the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities - A.1.3 Environment in the Outdoor Education Activities Procedures for other key sources of information).

Selected areas are defined by on shore marker buoys, flags, natural features or other nominated craft.

Consideration is given to wind eddies, rocks, shallows and other navigational hazards.

If the sailing activity is not being conducted by a Sailing Australian Discover Sailing Centre, the Department employee in charge should check with Marine Safety, Department of Transport and/or the local council, to determine whether there are any restrictions on the use of the selected location.

For more information regarding weather:

- Bureau of Meteorology
- Weatherzone
- Sea Breeze
- Swellnet

CAPACITY OF STUDENTS

Prior to commencing any sailing activity, the Department employee in charge must confirm that each student has the capacity and required swimming and water safety skills to participate safely.

Specific strategies and support must be put in place for those students who cannot swim and for students from cultural backgrounds where there may have been limited exposure to water based activities.

Learn-to-sail courses are suitable for students in Year 6 and above.

Sailing and sailboarding activities, which require a higher degree of maturity and physical development, are more appropriate for students in Years 7 and higher.

Before starting a sailing or sailboarding activity, the Department employee in charge must confirm that each student has the required swimming and water safety skills.

Students with a physical disability may participate in sailing and sailboarding activities provided adequate safety and control measures are implemented. Specific consideration is given to:

- the type and level of disability;
- on-water supervision levels;
- suitable flotation devices, if required;
- curriculum adjustments so that the student can access the curriculum activity on the same basis as their peers;
- availability and suitability of the craft; and

- on-shore assistance and supervision.

Any additional skills required by students to safely participate in all proposed activities are determined prior to the sailing or sail boarding activity, particularly if an expedition is involved. Refer to the relevant supporting document for the specific activity further information, qualifications and supervision requirements that apply.

Guidance

Before participating in sailing activities, students should be able to demonstrate swimming proficiency.

Closed water - students should also be able to demonstrate that they can swim 100 metres fully clothed and support themselves in water for a minimum of 15 minutes.

Open water - students should also be able to demonstrate that they can:

- *swim 100 metres fully clothed and support themselves in water for a minimum of 15 minutes;*
- *swim 200 metres in less than 7 minutes;*
- *carry out capsized drills and procedures; and*
- *use their life jacket with proficiency.*

The Department's Swimming and Water Safety Continuum, Safety Survival Sequence within the Swimming Instructors Handbook and Guidelines and Royal Life Saving Swim and Survive Instructor Assessment Guide are useful resources for gauging students' swimming and water safety skills. They are only indicative of students' skills at the time of assessment and their use does not guarantee students' safety, nor reduce teachers' duty of care responsibilities.

STUDENT HEALTH CARE

Refer to the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures) for further guidance.

ACTIVITIES

Activities conducted in aquatic environments generally require a high degree of risk analysis and management.

The full range of proposed activities is assessed before final decisions are made about activities and areas to be used.

Wind speed should be monitored. Beginners must not sail in an offshore wind that is over five (5) knots.

Sailing activities must not occur more than 5km from a safe landing point.

To clarify information about an extended coastal voyage such as a sea trek, contact Marine Safety, Department of Transport.

EQUIPMENT

The equipment to be used must be checked to confirm that it is appropriate to the activity, safe and in working order.

Appropriate first aid equipment must be readily accessible. The first aid kit must include items appropriate for the activity, environment, size and needs of the group, and duration of the activity.

A qualified supervisor must confirm correct rigging before any sailing craft is allowed on the water.

Sailing craft must not carry more participants than the design recommendation.

Sailing craft must:

- be of a suitable design and construction for the environmental conditions;
- be appropriate for the students' capacity and experience;
- be constructed or fitted to be buoyant when swamped; and
- have a mainsail that is capable of being lowered easily by hand when the sailing craft is in an upright or a capsize position.

Lifejackets

Each participant must wear a lifejacket at all times when on or near water. Lifejackets approved for general use must bear the relevant Standard or stamp (currently AS 4758 or ISO 12402) as follows:

- within protected waters or within 400m of the shore in unprotected waters: Level 50 (or higher)
- over 400m from shore in unprotected water: Level 100 (or higher).

For further information about lifejackets, refer to Marine Safety, Department of Transport.

Whistles must be attached to lifejackets.

Inflatable lifejackets must be maintained and serviced regularly in accordance with the manufacturer's advice.

Emergency equipment must be readily accessible and wherever practical, should be waterproofed.

If towing a sail craft, tow ropes can be used. In some instances, it may be necessary to secure the tow rope to the base of the mast (by looping it around several times), or the mast tabernacle (the fitting the mast is fixed to), as these would better accommodate the pressure of towing.

Gloves of an appropriate size should be worn for protection when pulling ropes.

All sail craft including windsurfers and kitesurfers must carry a compliant Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) or Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) if proceeding more than two nautical miles from the mainland shore or more than 400 metres from an island located more than two nautical miles from the mainland shore. A PLB should be attached to the person on the craft in case they become separated from the vessel.

Guidance

Sailing need not be restricted to dinghy classes; activities may also include fixed-keel yachts and catamarans.

All equipment should be secured or stowed in the craft.

In areas where strong winds are likely to affect the program, a smaller set of sails should be available. Alternatively, it should be possible to reef larger sails, or to drop one set of sails to depower the vessel.

Sailing craft should be fitted with sturdy tow rings and, other than those that have an enclosed self-draining hull, should carry an adequate bailer.

The centreboard should be sufficiently robust to resist distortion when supporting the weight of at least one crew member during the act of uprighting a craft after capsizing.

Centreboards should be secured to the hull so that they remain in the centreboard case when the hull is inverted.

Rudders should be secured to the hull.

Students should be made aware of the care and maintenance of the equipment as an integral part of sailing.

Clothing that provides protection against prevailing weather conditions should be worn (a hat, shirt, etc.).

A broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen should be applied as per manufacturer's recommendation.

Drinking water should be available at all times.

Safety or support power craft

A powered safety or support craft must be available for instruction and supervision at all sailing and sailboarding activities. The craft must comply with the requirements of Marine Safety, Department of Transport or the Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Act 2012 requirements.

A safety tether lanyard must be worn by the power boat driver at all times.

THE SUPERVISORY TEAM

Refer to the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures) for further guidance.

EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

Refer to the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures) for further guidance.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

The Department employee in charge must confirm that the supervisory team members possess skills in sailing and sailboarding, and have the appropriate experience, knowledge

and skills to identify and manage potential risks at any stage during sailing and sailboarding activities.

Refer to *General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities* (Appendix A of *Outdoor Education Activities Procedures*) for mandated:

- first aid and CPR accreditation requirements; and
- components of qualifications and competencies.

Minimum qualifications and/or formal training requirements:

At least one member of the supervisory team must hold a current, activity-specific qualification and/or have attained current, activity-specific competencies through a recognised tertiary institution or Registered Training Organisation (RTO); including:

Activity	Qualified supervisor requirements (at least ONE)
Dinghy Sailing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yachting Australia <i>Dinghy Instructor</i> certificate • Yachting Australia <i>Dinghy Racing Instructor</i> certificate • an equivalent qualification, as recognised by the Director General.
<i>Sail boarding or wind surfing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yachting Australia <i>Windsurfing Instructor</i> certificate • Yachting Australia <i>Windsurfer Racing Instructor</i> certificate • <i>Windsurfing Senior Instructor</i> certificate • an equivalent qualification, as recognised by the Director General.
<i>Keelboat</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yachting Australia <i>Keelboat Instructor</i> certificate • Yachting Australia <i>Keelboat Racing Instructor</i> certificate • an equivalent qualification, as recognised by the Director General.

Safety or support powerboat

If a safety or support craft is used, the supervisor in control of the craft must:

- hold a *Recreational Skipper's Ticket* (RST); and
- demonstrate skills in handling the craft being used; and
- have recent logged experience in performing a rescue and retrieving and towing a sail craft; and
- be a qualified and experienced *Safety Boat Operator*; or
- hold a Yachting Australia (YA) *National Power Boat Handling certificate* (NPHC); or
- hold a *Surf Life Saving Australia Inshore Rescue Boat Driver* award; or
- hold a *Rescue Water Craft Operator* award; or
- hold a relevant commercial ticket.

The Department employee in charge must be satisfied that the supervisor in control of the support or safety power boat has recent logged experience in effecting a rescue.

Guidance

For current information about recreation industry training, refer to the [Commonwealth Department of Education and Training](#).

Skills and experience

The Department employee in charge must confirm that the supervisory team:

- has experience in the activity at the level being offered to students;

- has at least one member with relevant qualifications;
- has at least one member with a current CPR qualification; and
- understands the emergency responses and supervision responsibilities.

Guidance

Teachers attending an organised course with a school group should have:

- *previously attended an in-service or professional learning course on sailing, be qualified to a Yachting Australia (YA) Dinghy, Windsurfing or Keelboat Instructor level, or*
- *hold a relevant YA Assistant Dinghy, Assistant Windsurfing or Assistant Keelboat Instructor qualification.*

MINIMUM LEVELS OF SUPERVISION

Supervisory requirements must take into consideration the:

- age, experience and capacity of each student;
- students' medical conditions or disabilities;
- supervisors' competence and experience;
- competence of supervisors at the venue;
- type of activity to be undertaken;
- nature of the environment (e.g. a closed or open water location, weather etc.); and
- location of the activity.

The level of risk in aquatic environments is dynamic and must be constantly monitored. The appropriate number of supervisors directly monitoring students in the water must be maintained at all times.

The total number of sail boards must not exceed twelve (12) per qualified supervisor.

The total number of all other sail craft must not exceed six (6) per qualified supervisor.

The following teacher to student requirements are a minimum and form part of the risk assessment the nominated Department employee must consider.

There must be at least two (2) experienced supervisors present at all times, at least one of these supervisors must be qualified.

Different levels of supervision are required for closed and open water environments.

Location		Number of qualified supervisors to students	Number of assistant supervisors to students
CLOSED WATER	Fixed location	1:22	1:22
	Non-fixed location e.g. sailing expedition	1:18	1:18 (>18 students, both supervisors must be qualified)

OPEN WATER	<i>Fixed or non-fixed location</i>	1:18	1:22
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Safety or support power craft

A powered safety or support craft must be available for instruction and supervision at all sailing and sailboarding activities. The craft must comply with the requirements of Marine Safety, Department of Transport.

The following sailing to rescue craft supervision requirements apply:

- sailing craft - a minimum of one rescue craft to six (6) sailing craft;
- sailboards - a minimum of one rescue craft to twelve (12) sailboards.

SUPERVISION STRATEGIES

Supervision strategies must:

- confirm that the safety and well-being of students is maintained at all times;
- reflect risks associated with proximity to water;
- address circumstances when students are not in clear view of the supervisors; and
- include students who are not actively participating in the activity.

A powered safety or support craft must be available for instruction and group control on the water.

Rules are established to confirm that all students remain in close proximity to the supervisor while sailing.

Guidance

Buddy practices are established so that students can monitor and check the safety and wellbeing of their partner or a buddy craft.

During poor weather conditions, all members of the group remain in close proximity.

Consideration is given to positioning, scanning and safety checks (see Swimming and Water-Based Activities).

Supervisors should arrange pre-determined stops en route, so that students can be provided with feedback.

Safety or support craft

Supervisors must exercise particular caution when students are entering, boarding or near the propellers of a vessel. Propeller guards are recommended.

Propeller aware strategies must be used whenever a person is in the water.

IDENTIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS AND CRAFT

A suitable system of identifying participating students is determined after assessing the environment, the capacity of the student cohort, the type of activities that will be undertaken, and the number of participating students.

Guidance

Systems may include:

- *confining students to designated areas not being utilised by other schools or the public;*
- *the wearing of rash vests, standardised high-visibility lycra vests or shirts, "life saver" or swimming caps, or neoprene armbands; and*
- *school uniform.*

Yachts and sailboards (or their sails) should be clearly marked and easily identifiable.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Refer to the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures) for further guidance.

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Refer to the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures) for further guidance.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Refer to the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures) for further guidance.

BRIEFING STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

All participants are briefed about:

- the educational purpose and the cooperative nature of the activity;
- activity itinerary;
- required skills appropriate to the activity;
- participants' roles and responsibilities, including standards of acceptable behaviour and activity rules;
- role and location of supervisors;
- system for identifying students and supervisors;
- food and water requirements;
- procedures that will be followed if members of the party are overdue, or become lost or separated from the group;
- potential hazards and safety procedures appropriate to the activity and venue;
- buddy practices and lost buddy procedures;
- areas demarcated and identified specifically for student groups;
- conditions associated with hypothermia, sunburn and dehydration;
- communication strategies that will be used throughout the activity, including a signal to gain the attention of the whole group; and a signal to be used if assistance is required;
- "righting" drill procedures, including the importance of staying with the craft;
- emergency and evacuation procedures, signals and location of emergency equipment;
- appropriate clothing for the activity and weather conditions, including thermal and sun protection;

- minimal impact principles for that location (see Leave No Trace principles);
- aspects of the environment and expected weather conditions;
- how to identify currents, tides, reefs and other potential hazards of the venue, including safe entry and exit points; and
- route to be followed including pre-determined stops and/or meeting points along the way (if applicable).

Special briefing sessions must be arranged for students who were absent from preparatory briefings.

INFORMED CONSENT

Refer to the General Requirements for all Outdoor Education Activities (Appendix A of Outdoor Education Activities Procedures) for further guidance.