



**Department of
Education**

SNORKELLING

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SNORKELLING

This document contains specific requirements related to snorkelling activities and must be read in conjunction with *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures*.

1. BACKGROUND

Snorkelling is an activity in which students use a mask, snorkel and swimming aids (e.g. fins) when swimming in closed and open water locations. Scuba or other breathing apparatus (including SNUBA apparatus) are not to be used.

Snorkelling does not include activities in swimming instruction programs where masks and snorkels are used as a teaching aid or incidentally as part of the swimming program. Refer to *Swimming and Water Based Activities* for further information, qualifications and supervision requirements that apply.

Guidance

The word "snuba" is a portmanteau of "snorkel" and "scuba". The swimmer uses swim fins, a diving mask, weights, and diving regulator as in scuba diving. For that reason, it supplies air under pressure which means barotraumas and decompression sickness become a factor.

DEFINITIONS

ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR

Assists the Qualified Supervisor and or Department teacher-in-charge. May or may not have relevant qualification or experience.

CALM WATER

A still or slow moving water environment with no to low swell. These areas may include; a sheltered/ protected coastal area or river, dam, waterhole or inland water body

FIXED LOCATION

Within 50 metres of the initial entry point.

NON-FIXED LOCATION

Any area beyond 50 metres from the initial entry point.

OPEN WATER

An uncontrolled/unprotected water environment that may be fast flowing or turbulent, such as a surf beach, flowing river or waterway, tidal coastal water, or areas affected by swell and/or strong currents.

SNORKELLING

Swimming through a body of water usually wearing: flippers; a diving mask; and using a shaped breathing tube called a snorkel.

TEACHER-IN-CHARGE

The member of the teaching staff who is authorised by the Department of Education to manage the school activity.

2. ENVIRONMENT

The Department teacher-in-charge confirms the suitability of the venue after considering the:

- location;
- size and turbidity of the body of water;
- strength of tides and currents;
- depth;
- presence and power of waves;
- presence and height of swell;
- students' capacity, skills and experience;
- planned snorkelling activities;
- availability of shelter from the weather;
- possibility of members of the public or other groups in the same area;
- temperature of the water;
- high tide changes that affect entry and exit; and
- supervision required.

Selected activity areas are to be appropriately defined with safety rope lines with buoys attached. In open and calm water locations, surrounding safety barriers such as the shoreline, piers, jetties or floating ropes may be used.

An out of water waiting area must be clearly defined where students should be supervised at all times.

Prevailing water and surf conditions in the selected area must be reappraised for suitability before students enter the water.

Weather conditions must be assessed and monitored in the days leading up to the activity, on the day of the activity, and throughout the activity. On the day, conditions and weather at the location are assessed and determined by the supervisory team to be safe before students participate in the activity. In particular, any swells or rips should be noted, and a correct way to move through the rip determined, in case it becomes necessary. The supervisory team may need to modify, relocate or cancel the activity at any time.

If snorkelling in ocean and estuarine environments, checks must be made with regards 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 teacher-in-charge must check current shark sightings using information is available from:

- [SharkSmart](#) website;
- [Surf Life Saving WA \(SLSWA\)](#) website; or
- SLSWA [Twitter feed](#).

Up-to-date information regarding current shark sightings can be accessed from the following apps:

- [Beachsafe](#)
- [SharkSmart WA](#)

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

Snorkelling activities must not be conducted in strong tidal areas, on a lee-shore where there is no safe exit point (e.g. where there is wind blowing on-shore in rocky areas), where a river is in flood, or in known estuarine crocodile habitats.

Snorkelling programs are not to be conducted if the water temperature is low and/or there is a risk of hypothermia.

Snorkelling sites must have:

- a minimum visibility of at least 3.0 metres under water, with the bottom visible from the surface;
- safe entry and exit points;
- swell (unbroken waves) that are less than 2.0 metres;
- shore breaking waves that are less than 0.5 metres. The Department teacher-in-charge should assess the conditions as swell and waves can become more hazardous when the duration and intensity changes, or if the forecast is for increasing conditions;
- minimal water movement (a calm water surface with minimal or no 'chop' on the water);
- stable weather and water conditions and no obvious change expected in the weather;
- a depth of no more than 8 metres for snorkel diving training purposes; and
- no obvious dangers such as boat traffic, fisherman, fishing boats near the snorkel diving area (fishing boats often have larger fish following).

Guidance

The qualified supervisor should have first-hand knowledge about the venue, weather conditions, tides and currents at that venue (see Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures).

The length of shoreline used for supervising snorkelling activities should not exceed 100 metres.

Particular care should be taken in areas where there are strong currents. Care should also be taken with rips or high tidal areas, especially in the north west of the state.

For more information regarding weather:

- [Bureau of Meteorology](#);
- [Weatherzone](#);
- [Seabreeze](#); and
- [Swellnet](#).

3. CAPACITY OF STUDENTS

The Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that each student has the required capacity and maturity to implement safety procedures. Students must have the appropriate swimming and water safety skills and understandings to participate safely.

Specific strategies and support must be put in place for those students from cultural backgrounds where there may have been limited exposure to water based activities.

In open water environments, it is recommended that students taking part in snorkelling activities are at least 12 years of age.

Alternative, modified or adjusted activities should be provided for students who have limited capacity to participate.

Students with an impairment may participate in desired activities provided adequate safety and control measures are implemented. Specific consideration is given to:

- the type and level of impairment;
- location and access; and
- curriculum adjustments so that the student can access the curriculum activity on the same basis as their peers.

Snorkel diving from a boat is not recommended for students under 14 years of age.

Students who have a medical condition that may have an impact on their safety must be cleared by a medical practitioner before they can participate.

The Department teacher-in-charge must be aware of health care maintenance and/or any intensive health care needs of students, particularly allergic reactions to stings or bites in a marine environment. Protective equipment such as gloves and appropriate exposure suits should be considered for students who are susceptible.

A re-assessment of the capacity of each student is undertaken if any circumstances surrounding the activity change. This includes any change in the condition of the aquatic environment, their medical fitness, or their capacity to undertake the activity.

Before snorkelling beyond 2.0 metres in depth, students must have developed the following skills and understandings:

<i>Skills</i>	<i>Understandings</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submerging and resurfacing confidently without snorkelling equipment • Hand signals (ok, not ok, distress signals, etc.) • Entry and exit methods • Equalising pressure in ears and mask air space • Cleaning and replacing the face mask • Clearing a flooded snorkel and mask • Using a flooded mask or no mask • Surface diving techniques, including equalising the pressure in ears when descending • Correct finning technique • Duck diving • What to do in the case of equipment failure (self-rescue and rescue techniques) • What to do in the case of cramp and assisting another diver (self-rescue and rescue techniques) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment • Snorkel planning • The importance of adhering to the buddy system (where one dives and the other one stays on the surface - one up, one down) • Boyles law which applies to equalising air spaces and compression affecting buoyancy • The properties of light and sound under water • Buoyancy concepts and control • Dangers of separating from the group; • Hyperventilation • Hypothermia • Barotrauma squeeze (middle ear squeeze) • Dangerous marine animals

Guidance

The Department's Swimming and Water Safety Continuum and the Safety Survival Sequence (refer to Swimming and Water Safety Activities document) 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 student skills at the time of assessment and their use does not guarantee students' safety, nor reduce a teacher's duty of care responsibilities.

Prior to engaging in snorkelling activities, students should be able to:

- *submerge and resurface safely;*
- *demonstrate survival sculling, floating and treading water;*
- *swim 200 metres in less than seven (7) minutes; and*
- *support themselves in water for a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes without the aid of a flotation device.*

*For **open water snorkelling**, (in addition to being able to demonstrate the skills listed above) students should have logged at least four hours in calm water before advancing to open water.*

If a student's capacity has been compromised due to injury or illness, they may require re-assessment prior to re-engaging with snorkelling.

Students with asthma should have spare medication for emergency treatment as close as practicable, so that if an inhaler is lost in the water, a spare is immediately available.

4. STUDENT HEALTH CARE

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

5. ACTIVITIES

Activities include **snorkel swimming** (snorkelling on the surface of the water, using snorkelling apparatus) or **snorkel diving** (breath holding while diving and swimming below the surface of the water).

The full program is assessed before final decisions are made about the activities and areas to be used.

On the day of the activity, the supervisory team must assess conditions at the site as being suitable for participating students.

A warm up session is conducted.

Initial instruction is conducted in shallow water.

Limits must be set on group movements, including depth.

Participating in free diving activities is not recommended.

Appropriately timed rest stops and food/water breaks are planned.

Buddy practices are maintained at all times.

Students must be competent snorkelling from the shore before attempting a snorkel dive from a boat.

The snorkel diving point in open water should be within 200 metres of a safe landing point, or within 100 metres of a support craft (if one is used).

Dive areas are clearly defined and surrounded by safety barriers such as the shoreline, jetties, floating ropes or piers.

Recreational or free swims

Refer to *Swimming and Water Based Activities* for information, qualifications and supervision requirements that apply if a recreational 'free' swim or similar activity is proposed before, during or after a snorkelling program.

Guidance

*Swimming in a pool using a snorkel, mask and fins may be regarded as an extension activity for a school swimming program. Where this occurs, the *Swimming and Water Based Activities* supporting document applies. There should be no intention of progressing this activity into snorkelling as an adventure activity.*

*Minimal environmental impact principles are followed at all times. Snorkel divers should **not** collect natural objects or relics while on a dive unless a licence has been obtained for marine study purposes. Objects taken for this purpose are returned after examination. Marine life may be picked up, but is returned to the same spot. If rocks are turned over, they are replaced as found.*

If supervisors require evidence of experience, a log book record should be completed after each dive.

6. EQUIPMENT

The Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that equipment to be used (whether it is owned, borrowed or hired) conforms to the relevant Australian Standard, is appropriate to the activity, safe and in working order.

Students must carry out appropriate pre-snorkel checks.

Students should, where practical, use their own face masks, fins and snorkels for safety, hygiene and comfort. If equipment is shared, it must be thoroughly disinfected prior to use by another person.

Supervisors should confirm that students have correctly fitted equipment. Appropriate wetsuits that fit correctly should be worn if the temperature of the water warrants such protection. Rash vest and thermal rash vests are also recommended.

Emergency equipment must be readily accessible. Following assessment of the site and availability of rescue equipment, the Department teacher-in-charge should determine whether additional non-contact rescue devices for reaching and throwing are necessary (e.g. poles, pole with looped rope, inflated tube, ropes, float, flotation aids and surfboards). Students should be familiar with using clothing and human chain reach rescue strategies.

Supervisors should carry a whistle to gain the attention of the whole group. Emergency whistle procedures should be practiced and understood by the group.

The following equipment is required for the whole group:

- appropriate first aid equipment must be readily accessible and include items that are appropriate to the activity, environment, size and needs of the party and duration of the activities. At least one member of the supervisory team must be current and accredited in administering CPR, first aid and be able to effect a rescue at the chosen site;
- an international Code Flag A (i.e. minimum size 600 mm x 750 mm attached to a large float) must be used to mark the dive site if it is where boats may be encountered or where participants are swimming more than 50 metres from the shore;
- communication equipment must be readily accessible; and
- transport must be readily available in case of emergency.

Mobile phones must be available for use in an emergency situation (with allowance made for the fact that they do not operate in all localities). Where there is no mobile phone coverage, UHF or marine radios should be used. A satellite phone is an alternative option.

Where a safety or support power boat is required, the craft must comply with Department of Transport Marine requirements. Propeller guards are recommended.

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

Students must be positively buoyant at all times until they are in Years 11 and 12.

Knives, spear guns, hand spears or slings must not be carried or used by participants at any time.

Guidance

For further information, refer to Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide: Snorkelling

The equipment recommended for each participating student comprises of:

- *an appropriate wet/dry suit that fits correctly, including boots and gloves;*
- *a mask fitted with tempered glass and finger holes for equalising pressure. The mask should enclose the nose (nose pocket) and seal correctly;*
- *a suitable snorkel with safety colour top should be attached or attachable (usually the left-hand side) to the mask and in excellent condition;*
- *a weight belt fitted with a quick-release buckle (when snorkel diving). Each student's weight belt should be less than the weight required to achieve neutral buoyancy so that the students remain positively buoyant; and*
- *fins (flippers) that are correctly fitted and suit the conditions.*

Students should bring additional clothing to protect them from the sun/wind/cold before snorkelling, and as soon as they leave the water, as appropriate for the location and weather (e.g. a towel, jumper, long trousers, hat, and jacket).

Younger students should use a small-bore diameter snorkel.

Students may wear a buoyancy compensator or positive buoyancy aid.

One piece of rescue equipment should be carried by members of the supervisory team for every 12 students.

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

Students who own sunglasses should be encouraged to bring and wear them when required.

Drinking water should be available at all times.

7. THE SUPERVISORY TEAM

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

8. EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

9. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for mandated:

- first aid qualifications (A.5.3.); and
- aquatic rescue qualifications (A.5.4.).

Recommended minimum qualifications and/or formal training requirements

Different qualifications are required for snorkelling activities conducted in swimming pools, calm water and open water environments.

In all water environments, the supervisory team must:

- have a current aquatic rescue qualification that is appropriate for snorkelling activities at the proposed location and the physical attributes required be able to effect such a rescue;
- be able to perform first aid (i.e. hold a current first aid qualification, including the aquatic rescue, that is relevant to the activity and location); and
- have documented evidence of current and relevant snorkelling experience and of the location to be used.

In open water environments the supervisory team must:

- have the instructional qualifications or nationally recognised competencies gained from an education institution or nationally recognised training provider, or equivalent.

All supervisors should as a minimum, be able to swim twice the length of the area they are supervising. Supervisors should also have knowledge and an understanding of snorkelling and snorkel diving related injuries (e.g. pressure injuries, carbon dioxide excess, cold temperature effects, hyperventilation, salt water aspiration syndrome, shallow water blackout etc.)

The Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that the supervisory team:

- has all of the required qualifications, including first aid, and the relevant aquatic rescue (see table on p11);
- have documented evidence of current and relevant snorkelling experience at the level being offered to students and of the location to be used; and
- understands the emergency responses and supervision responsibilities.

Skills and experience

Guidance

Records of qualifications

A record of staff swimming and water safety qualifications should be maintained by the school. The date of issue of the qualification and formal notification of any subsequent renewal or upgrade should be included.

Safety or support craft

The supervisor in control of the safety or support power boat must hold a *Recreational Skippers Ticket* (RST) and be competent in the use of the craft; and

- be a qualified and experienced *Safety Boat Operator*; or
- hold an *Australian Sailing Power Boat Handling* certificate (PBH); or
- hold a relevant commercial ticket.

The Department teacher-in-charge must be satisfied that any supervisor operating a safety craft has recent logged experience in effecting a relevant support and rescue operation.

Where a safety or support power boat is required to accompany paddlers, the craft must comply with Department of Transport *Marine: Recreational Boating* or *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Act 2012* requirements.

Propeller guards must be used while students are in the water.

Qualified supervisors	
SWIMMING POOLS AND CALM WATER	<p>Qualified Supervisors must have relevant snorkelling experience with current knowledge of the location to be used and at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) Surf Rescue</i> certificate; or • <i>SLSWA Community Based Surf Rescue</i> certificate; or • <i>RLSSA Bronze Medallion</i> or <i>START</i> certificate; or • <i>RLSSA Pool Lifeguard</i> certificate (swimming pools only); or • <i>SLSA Bronze Medallion</i>; or • an equivalent qualification, as recognised by the Director General.
OPEN WATER	<p>Qualified Supervisors must have relevant snorkelling experience with current knowledge of the location to be used and at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant snorkelling experience with current knowledge of the location to be used; and • Have nationally recognised set of competencies gained from a nationally recognised training provider in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Guide snorkelling</i>; or ○ <i>Instruct snorkelling skills</i>; • a nationally accredited <i>SCUBA Coach/Instructor</i> award; or • <i>Divemaster, Dive Controller, Assistant Instructor</i> certificate or higher; or • nationally accredited <i>SCUBA Coach/Instructor</i> award; or • <i>Open Water dive certificate</i>; or • <i>Certificate III in Sport and Recreation or Outdoor Education</i> with specialisation in appropriate activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Demonstrate snorkelling activities</i>; ○ <i>Guide snorkelling</i>; ○ <i>Instruct snorkelling skills</i>; or • an equivalent qualification, as recognised by the Director General. <p><u>PLUS</u> one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) Surf Rescue</i> certificate; or • <i>SLSWA Community Based Surf Rescue</i> certificate; or • <i>RLSSA START certificate</i>; or • <i>SLSA Bronze Medallion</i>; or • an equivalent qualification, as recognised by the Director General.
Assistant supervisor (or shore responder)	
ALL WATERS	<p>Assistant Supervisors must have at least <u>ONE</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scuba Rescue Diver</i> certificate; or • <i>RLSSA Bronze Medallion</i> or <i>START certificate</i>; or • <i>RLSSA Pool Lifeguard</i> certificate (swimming pools only); or • <i>SLSA Bronze Medallion</i>; or • <i>SLSA Surf Rescue</i> certificate; or • <i>SLSWA Community Based Surf Rescue</i> certificate; or • an equivalent qualification, as recognised by the Director General.

10. MINIMUM LEVELS OF SUPERVISION

The Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that the supervisory team members possess skills in the relevant water based activities and have the appropriate experience, knowledge and skills to identify and manage potential risks at any stage during snorkelling activities.

Supervisory requirements must take into consideration the:

- age, experience and capacity of each student;
- students' medical conditions or disabilities;
- supervisors' qualifications and diving experience;
- competence of the external provider (if applicable);
- types of activity to be undertaken;
- nature of the environment (e.g. calm or open water location);
- location of the activity;
- *Surf Life Saving Western Australia (SLSA) [Twitter feed](#)* of shark sightings; and
- weather conditions, which need to be assessed and monitored in the days leading up to the activity, on the day of the activity, and throughout the activity. The supervisory team may need to modify or cancel the activity at any time.

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.

Greater supervision must be provided for beginners, primary aged or less able students who are participating in activities.

A second supervisor is not required for all aquatic environments, provided that there are clear systems in place so that supervisors can quickly summon assistance if required (i.e. swimming pools).

Students must be within the qualified supervisors line of sight at all times. If activity goes outside of line of sight, a second supervisor is required to maintain adequate supervision.

At any time during the activity, the teacher-in-charge should be aware that supervision levels may need to be increased.

The maximum number of students in the water at one time is based on an assessment of the water and weather conditions, and the impact of these conditions on effective supervision. If there are not enough qualified staff to supervise the number of students who are snorkelling, students may need to be rotated in and out of the water so that safe supervisory requirements can be maintained.

All students not directly involved in snorkelling activities must be appropriately supervised.

When using buddy systems students should be appropriately briefed and must maintain a rigorous lookout role for their designated buddy in the water.

The minimum level of supervision is dependent on the number of participants in the water and the aquatic environment in which the activity takes place.

SWIMMING POOL – SUPERVISOR ON POOL DECK

Kindergarten - Year 3

This activity is not recommended for students in Kindergarten - Year 3.

Year 4 - 6

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one qualified supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof; and
- one supervisor for every 12 students or part thereof (including the qualified supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

It is recommended that there are two supervisors at all times:

- one qualified supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof.

SWIMMING POOL - SUPERVISOR IN THE WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one qualified supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof; and
- one supervisor for every six students or part thereof (including the qualified supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one qualified supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof; and
- one supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the qualified supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

It is recommended that there are two supervisors at all times for Snorkelling activities:

- one qualified supervisor for every 22 students or part thereof.

CALM WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3

This activity is not recommended for students in Kindergarten - Year 3.

Year 4 - 6

This activity is only to be conducted in a fixed location with clearly defined boundaries over no greater distance than 50 metres from the initial entry point.

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one qualified supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof; and
- one supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the qualified supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- One qualified supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof.

OPEN WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3

This activity is not recommended for students in Kindergarten - Year 3.

Year 4 - 6

This activity is not recommended for students in Year 4 - 6.

Year 7 - 12

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- One qualified supervisor for every 12 students or part thereof.

The table below illustrates the supervision requirements for common group sizes. Groups may be larger than those indicated here but must remain within the prescribed supervision ratios and any limits set out earlier in this document.

<i>Year level</i>	<i>Environment</i>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>Qualified supervisor</i>	<i>Experienced assistant supervisor</i>	<i>Total supervisory team</i>
K - 3	Swimming pool: On pool deck	This activity is not recommended for K - 3			
	Swimming pool: Supervisor in the water	1 - 6	1	1	2
		7 - 12	1	1	2
		13 - 18	1	2	3
		19 - 24	1	3	4
	Calm water	This activity is not recommended for K - 3			
Open water	This activity is not recommended for K - 3				
4 - 6	Swimming pool: On pool deck	1 - 24	1	1	2
		25 - 36	2	1	3
	Swimming pool: In the water	1 - 16	1	1	2
		17 - 24	1	2	3
		25 - 32	2	2	4
	Calm Water	1 - 16	1	1	2
		17 - 24	2	1	3
		25 - 32	2	2	4
Open Water	This activity is not recommended for Year 4 - 6				
7 - 12	Swimming pool: On pool deck	1 - 32	1	0	1
	Swimming pool: In the water	1 - 22	1	0	1
	Calm Water	1 - 16	1	1	2
		17 - 32	2	0	2
	Open Water	1 - 12	1	1	2
		13 - 24	2	0	2

11. SUPERVISION STRATEGIES

Supervision strategies must be confirmed by the Department teacher-in-charge to confirm the safety and wellbeing of students is maintained at all times.

Supervision strategies must:

- address circumstances where students are not in clear view of the supervisor(s);
- reflect risks associated with the proximity of water for those students not participating in the activity; and
- include head counts at regular intervals.

The appropriate number of supervisors directly monitoring the students in the water must be maintained at all times.

While supervision can take place in or out of the water, it is recommended that one member of the supervisory team is placed on lookout on the beach or poolside, or on an elevated feature such as a vessel, groyne, pontoon, dive platform or jetty.

Buddy practices are maintained at all times using a one up/one down technique, so that students can monitor and check the safety and wellbeing of their partner (where there are uneven numbers of students, groups of three buddies may be set up).

A head count must be conducted of students and supervisors immediately upon return to the boat, diving platform or beach.

Supervisors continually assess the threat of marine craft.

Safety or support craft

- A tether lanyard must be worn by the power boat driver at all times.
- Supervisors must exercise particular caution when students are entering, boarding or near the propellers of a vessel. A propeller guard is recommended.
- Propeller-aware strategies must be used whenever participants are in the water.

If other schools or groups are using the same venue potential risks must be identified. Supervisory strategies must be put in place to deal with the nature and number of those groups, and any risks that might arise from that situation.

Guidance

For further information, refer to [Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide: Snorkelling](#).

Consideration should be given to position, scanning and safety check systems (see [Swimming and Water Based Activities](#)).

It is recommended that a head count is continually performed during the activity.

12. IDENTIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Students and supervisors must be easily identifiable. A system of identification is determined after assessing the aquatic environment, students' swimming and water safety skills, the type of activities to be undertaken, and the number of students. Staff and students should wear a highly visible rash vest or easily identifiable item.

Supervisors should make themselves clearly identifiable by wearing an alternative colour rash vest in the water.

Guidance

Systems for identifying students may include:

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

13. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

15. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

16. BRIEFING STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

The Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that all participants are briefed about:

- the educational purpose and the cooperative nature of the activity;
- the activity itinerary;
- required skills appropriate to the activity;
- participants' roles and responsibilities, including standards of acceptable behaviour and activity rules;
- the role and location of supervisors;
- the 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;
- conditions associated with hypothermia, sunburn and dehydration;
- the dangers of hyperventilation;
- areas demarcated and identified specifically for student groups;
- 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;
- 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 (if appropriate);
- how to identify currents, tides, reefs (if applicable) and other potential hazards of the venue, including safe entry and exit points; and
- the route to be followed including pre-determined stops and/or meeting points along the way (if applicable).

Special information sessions must be arranged for students who were absent from the pre-snorkel briefing.

Changing environmental conditions encountered during snorkelling activities may necessitate the need to brief students during the activity.

17. INFORMED CONSENT

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.