

11.3 PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS 2024/2025 SEASON REPORT - ATTACHMENTS

Attachment Titles:

1. Guidance Note - Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management

Attachment 1 - Guidance Note - Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management



Guidance Notes

**Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management –
Version 1: August 2024**



DISCLAIMER

The information provided by Statewide Mutual in this document is of a general nature and has been provided solely on the basis that users will be responsible for making their own assessment of it, having regard to their own circumstances, needs & requirements and those of their Council.

While Statewide Mutual endeavours to provide up to date information and guidance for your use, it may be open to misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Consequently, you should seek independent legal advice where you intend using this information.

Statewide Mutual expressly disclaims any liability associated with, or arising from, the use or incorporation of the information provided in this document by the user.

PROPRIETARY NATURE OF PROPOSAL

This document is prepared for use by Members of Statewide Mutual including for use by Members within each Member's organisation. Therefore, this document is not to be made available to anyone apart from the Member of Statewide Mutual to whom it is addressed and may be made available to other persons or organisations only with the prior written permission of Statewide Mutual.

© COPYRIGHT

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be permitted, in writing, by Statewide Mutual. This clause does not prevent a Member of Statewide Mutual to whom this document is provided from adapting this document for use within that Member's organisation.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

2 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Disclaimer	2
Proprietary Nature of Proposal.....	2
© Copyright.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Document Control	5
Introduction	6
Background.....	7
General Principles.....	8
What is a swimming pool?	9
drowning statistics.....	10
Drowning Definition	10
Drowning Statistics	10
liability	11
Managing risk in general	12
Procedural Approach	14
Drowning prevention	14
Determining if and why a pool should be unsupervised.....	15
Understanding the Facility.....	16
Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment.....	16
Supervision (Staffing/Resourcing)	17
Training/Qualifications.....	17
Advertising an Unsupervised Pool.....	18
Signage	18
Depth Markers	21
Water Advisory Signs.....	21
Mandatory and Emergency Signage.....	23
Placement and Visibility	23
Diving	23
Statewide strongly suggests signage state no diving is allowed in unsupervised pools.	24
Facility Access	24
Emergency Management	25
Inspections	26
Water Quality Testing.....	27
Water Slides, Diving Boards, Floating Recreational Items.....	27
Water Play Parks and Other Recreational Aquatic Structure.....	28

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

3 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Shaded Areas, Playgrounds and BBQ/Picnic Areas 28

Playgrounds and picnic areas should be positioned away from bodies of water. Appropriate measures such as fencing and signage for parental supervision should be installed to reduce the risk of unsupervised and unintentional entry into the water. 29

Disabled Access 29

First Aid 29

Lease Agreements/Hire Agreements..... 30

Documentation/Record Keeping..... 31

Targeted Public Awareness and Education Strategy 31

Establishment of a Public Water Safety Management Plan..... 32

References..... 33

Sample Document Links 34

Acknowledgements 34



Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024



DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION NO.	DETAILS	ENDORSEMENT
Version 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Created	August 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	



Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

5 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



INTRODUCTION

Managing a swimming facility presents interesting and unique challenges. The difficulties facing member councils in remote locations are certainly understood and acknowledged.

The cost of operating a swimming facility may significantly exceed any revenues received, although councils must not reduce the level or quality of the service at the risk of staff or the public.

Council, as the asset owner, may consider not providing paid or volunteer lifeguarding services. Either way it must ensure the facility is managed appropriately and services provided meet duty of care and standard of care obligations to avoid reasonably foreseeable loss or harm.

It is not the purpose of this document to replace information already addressed in other industry publications such as Office of Local Government (OLG) "Practice Note 15 – Water Safety", or Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSSA) "Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations". These documents are the industry standards for swimming pool operations and should always be consulted first.

This Guidance Note has been written to provide councils with practical assistance to manage their public liability risks. It is intended to complement the Guidelines provided by Royal Life Saving and the Office of Local Government, not to replace them.

Statewide Mutual strongly recommends council owned and operated swimming pools meet the minimum supervision requirements set out in the OLG and RLSSA Guidelines.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

6 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



BACKGROUND

Most council swimming pools were or still are partially or fully supervised. In some circumstances where lifeguards cannot be attracted, or patronage is so low the expense is prohibitive, some councils choose to operate unsupervised pools.

In recent years there have been several fatal and non-fatal drownings as well as serious injuries sustained at swimming pools. There have also been prosecutions, criminal charges and large compensation settlements following these incidents.

There is an expectation from the public that when using a public swimming facility, they will not be placed in harm. Councils should utilise safe systems approaches to drowning prevention to ensure this expectation is met.

“Practice Note 15 – Water Safety” was developed by the Office of Local Government (OLG), in 1998, to assist councils in “exercising their water safety functions”. This document is regularly updated “to ensure it reflects current knowledge levels, training standards and legislative requirements”.

RLSSA released the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations in August 1991 (the GSPO) and has revised them constantly to keep pace with changing legislation, standards and knowledge.

Reference should be made to the RLSSA website for up-to-date information regarding the Guidelines.
<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/Aquatic-Risk-and-Guidelines/guidelines/GSPO>

Practice Note 15 – Water Safety, Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation (the GSPO) and the Statewide Mutual best practice manuals and CIP self-assessments are the principal documents used to develop this Guidance Note.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

7 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



GENERAL PRINCIPLES

As Statewide Mutual is the major provider of public liability cover for NSW local government authorities, the focus of this guideline is principally from a public liability perspective.

It is not the purpose of this document to tell councils how to run their swimming facilities. This document is designed to provide some practical examples of how to utilise a risk management approach to the management of an unsupervised swimming facility.

This document attempts to identify the key elements required to manage unsupervised risks. This does not preclude councils from adopting controls above that which is considered minimum. It is imperative that accurate records are kept supporting any decisions or courses of action taken.

Several reference sources are being used in the development of this Guidance Note but the focus will remain with public liability. Where possible, links to those resources are included.

Council should adopt a systematic and comprehensive risk management approach to the management of all risks. This is demonstrated in the AS ISO 31000:2018 – Risk Management Guidelines.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

8 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



WHAT IS A SWIMMING POOL?

The *Public Health Act 2010* (the Act) and *Public Health Regulation 2022* (the Regulations) define and detail requirements for public swimming pools and spa pools specifically sections 34 – 37 of the Act and sections 26 to 31 of the Regulations.

The Act and Regulations define a public swimming pool or spa pool as:

Any structure that is used or intended to be used for human bathing, swimming or diving to which the public is admitted, whether free of charge, on payment of a fee or otherwise. This includes pools:

- to which the public is admitted as an entitlement of membership of a club; or
- provided at a workplace for the use of employees; or
- provided at a hotel, motel or guest house or at holiday units, or similar facility, for the use of guests; or
- provided at a school or hospital; or
- situated at private residential premises used for commercial purposes.

A spa pool includes any structure (other than a swimming pool) that holds more than 680 litres of water, is used or intended to be used for human bathing and has facilities for injecting jets of water or air into the water.

Water play parks and other recreational aquatic structures, including water slides and any interactive water feature or fountain that is intended to be bathed in for recreational purposes are not declared to be a public swimming pool or spa pool if they use a public water supply, do not use a recirculation system and do not store water.

A natural swimming pool is a swimming pool that contains only untreated water that is supplied directly to the pool from the ocean or other natural water source and does not have a circulation system. Although natural swimming pools are exempt from the operating, notification and registration requirements for swimming pools, the Regulations provide powers for temporary closure orders and directions to take action if a pool is a risk to public health.

NSW Guidelines for Public Swimming Pools and Spa Pools - draft 2022 will assist public swimming pool and spa pool operators to meet the requirements of the Act and Regulations and to manage public health risks. The Guidelines also provide advice to local and state government environmental health officers to help fulfil their regulatory and advisory roles.

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/browse/inforce>

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Pages/public-pools-and-spas.aspx>

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

9 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



DROWNING STATISTICS

Drowning Definition

The definition for drowning determined by the World Health Organisation and International Life Saving Federation is:

Drowning is the process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion/immersion in liquid.

The outcomes of drowning are classified as:

- Death (fatal).
- Morbidity (injury).
- No morbidity (no Injury).

Note the following words should no longer be used:

- 'near-drowning;'
- 'dry or wet drowning;'
- 'secondary drowning;'
- 'drowned'; or
- 'near drowned.'

Drowning Statistics

Drowning data shows that public swimming pools remain statistically the safest places to swim, with the least recorded drowning deaths each year compared to other aquatic locations.

- In 2022/23 in Australia, there were 29 drowning deaths in swimming pools, 6 of which occurred in public pools. Additionally, there were 7,879 aquatic rescues and near misses in public pools.
- It is estimated 295 people fatally drown each year in Australia.
- For every fatal drowning it is estimated there are 8 non-fatal drownings in children 0-4 years and 3 non-fatal drownings for those over 4 years.
- The annual estimated cost to society of drowning in Australia is \$1.24 billion.
- Recorded global fatal drownings are estimated to be 236,000 people annually although the number is thought to be double that.

Every year, Royal Life Saving produces the National Drowning Report. This report examines the factors that contributed to drowning deaths in Australia by examining who, where, when and how people have drowned in Australian waterways over the last year. Royal Life Saving has produced a National Drowning Report every year since 1995. You can find all the National Drowning Reports in the searchable database at; <https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/research-and-policy/drowning-research/national-drowning-reports>

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

10 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



LIABILITY

At common law, the duty of care is to take reasonable precautions against foreseeable risks of harm to patrons of your swimming facility. Accordingly, councils must be able to demonstrate they have exercised "due diligence" in the management of their facilities.

To meet "due diligence" and "duty of care" obligations councils must be proactive in identifying foreseeable hazards, controlling associated risks and documenting all actions in their corporate records systems. Councils should communicate those hazards and controls with other stakeholders. Council should also proactively seek and record the risk management practices of other stakeholders where necessary.

The *Civil Liability Act 2002* (NSW) provides some protection for public authorities against public liability claims which may arise from an incident at a swimming facility. To assist in mounting a potential defence in the event of a claim, council must be able to readily retrieve all associated documents in order to provide evidence of actions undertaken and the reasoning behind those actions being undertaken.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

11 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



MANAGING RISK IN GENERAL

Drownings continue to occur far too frequently in NSW public swimming pools.

In 2023, tragically 6 people drowned in supervised public pools in NSW.

Given the scope for both liability claims and statutory proceedings against members pursuant to the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW), it is critical to ensure risks are appropriately identified, assessed and responded to. Having regard to the above, it is recommended councils undertake a risk assessment consistent with the AS ISO 31000:2008 – Risk Management Guidelines to inform its decision-making on these matters.

The assessment should be documented and recorded to provide evidence that council has acted reasonably having regard to the relevant circumstances, including the identification, assessment and ongoing management of risks and identification of controls and treatments required to mitigate risks to an acceptable level.

There are other benefits to conducting a risk assessment including that it:

- provides a process by which all risks that may have an impact on council can be considered (including risks to such things as councils' reputation or public image), in addition to the risks that are solely associated with councils' legal liability exposure; and
- can assist council in providing evidence of its reasonable response to risks should a future incident eventuate which results in a claim against council.

It is anticipated the following reasons will be relevant in council exploring and understanding the context for its assessment of the risks associated with the proposal:

- constrained or insufficient capacity to adequately fund related operations;
- difficulties to attract, retain or replace appropriately skilled and qualified supervisory personnel, including with respect to the seasonal nature for swimming pool use;
- limited capacity for the council to allocate funding for appropriate training in circumstances where there may be sufficient local interest to undertake same;
- consideration of previous incidents at similar facilities to identify potential risks and preventative measures, as well as awareness of industry trends to ensure the facility meets current standards and community needs;
- community and/or stakeholder group expectations for the council to provide swimming pool facility and access, especially where pools are already installed; and/or
- an imperative to improve community asset/facility utilisation rates and financial performance for the asset with the lowest possible level of expenditure.

An added layer of complexity and uncertainty can arise in circumstances where responsibilities for management or control are shared with an external party, such as a lessee, contractual facility manager or other interested party.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

12 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Statewide Mutual and SafeWork NSW recommend risk assessments related to the operations of pools and aquatic facilities should consider the Royal Life Saving Australia's *Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation*.

The issue of pool supervision is explicitly addressed by the GSPO which commenced in 2019 and replaced many of the preceding position statements (including LP1 Low Patronage Pools).

Of relevance, section 1.2.1 of the GSPO states:

“Supervision should be in place for all swimming pools (both outdoor and indoor) that are situated, constructed or installed, on any non-residential premises occupied by the Crown, public authority, or by a private body for public or commercial use.”

Section 2.2 deals with key requirements for preparing a Supervision Plan, how it is integrated with the facility's safety management system and various scenarios.

GSPO Aquatic Supervision 4.2.1 states that the owner or operator of an aquatic facility should conduct an aquatic risk assessment to determine what is required for the supervision at an Aquatic Facility.

Further, section 2.3.2 identifies as a minimum supervision is defined as:

At a minimum, Supervision in an Aquatic Facility is a minimum of 1 person over the age of 18 (Lifeguards may be younger however must be supervised by a person over 18) who:

- is directed by a set of arrangements within a Supervision Plan;
- holds a current skill set equivalent to that of a Pool Lifeguard;
- is in a position to maintain effective supervision of all persons on, below the surface and the bottom of a swimming pool (or their zone);
- is able to respond to and reach a persons in distress in the swimming pool within 30 seconds; and
- Who has timely access to:
 - A Rescue Tube
 - A Spinal Board
 - A First Aid Kit
 - An Oxygen Resuscitator
 - A Defibrillator

Whilst the GSPO is not explicitly referred to as a legislative requirement, it is suggested if there were ever an accident involving the operation of an unsupervised pool, SafeWork NSW, a court and/or a coroner would almost certainly defer to the GSPO when considering the reasonableness of any decision of a council to make public pool facilities available on an unsupervised basis as part of an investigation or hearing.

It is also suggested that a court, SafeWork NSW or a coroner would expect pool facility operators to have obtained access to the GSPO and are familiar with its content.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

13 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



PROCEDURAL APPROACH

Drowning prevention

It is recommended a Safe Systems Approach to Drowning Prevention be utilised.

Often multiple individual events lead to an immersion event, like the Swiss Cheese Principle where several holes must align for an event to occur.

The Safe Systems Approach to Drowning Prevention for unsupervised pools considers events and applies multiple barriers to prevent drownings such as:

- A detailed risk assessment of the facility and its intended operations.
- A safe facility.
- Swipe card access.
- Pool induction upon receipt of swipe card.
- Well designed and placed signage.
- Education and engagement with the community to raise awareness about water safety and drowning prevention
- Advertising.
- Management plans – facility management, supervision, facility safety, emergency actions, and operations.
- Maintenance of facility.
- Availability of emergency rescue equipment.
- CCTV/drowning detection technology.
- Regular safety audits and inspections.
- Emergency contact points and communication systems within the facility.
- Training for users on basic water safety and rescue techniques.
- Implementation of a buddy system, requiring a minimum of two people to be present when using the pool

The barriers can be physical, behavioural, or procedural and be targeted at the organisation, community and individuals.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

14 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Determining if and why a pool should be unsupervised

It's imperative councils understand why they are considering an unsupervised pool. This is a decision which is not to be taken lightly and could carry potentially serious consequences for patrons, council officers, the council, community, and other Mutual members.

The tables below will help councils in determining why they're considering an unsupervised pool and can be used as a rough estimate to determine gate takings and supervision costs.

The first table offers some of the many questions as to why a council might be considering making a pool unsupervised. The Yes / No answers may help with considering the idea.

Traditional "mum and dad" pool management contracts for rural swimming pools are approximately \$90 - \$120K + canteen takings for a season. Using \$5 as the average entry fee you can quickly work out councils income based on the number of patrons. The more patrons, the more income, the higher the risk exposure and the greater the requirement for supervision.

Reason for No Supervision	Yes / No	Number of patrons per year	Income based on average of \$5 entry fee
Insufficient resources to fund operations			
Council is just trying to save money			
The pool is underutilised		0 – 2,500	\$0 - \$12,500
Difficulty to attract, retain or replace supervisory personnel		2,500 – 5,000	\$12,500 - \$25,000
Community wants to run the pool		5,000 – 7,500	\$25,000 - \$37,500
Political pressure		7,500 – 10,000	\$37,500 - \$50,000
Council has several pools and wants all to remain open but wishes to save on operating costs		10,000 – 12,500	\$50,000 - \$62,500
Community expects council to open existing pools and council wants to minimise expenditure		12,500 – 15,000	\$62,500 - \$75,000
The community wants another pool, but council doesn't want to fund the supervision		15,000 – 17,500	\$75,000 - \$87,250
Council wants to move to netted swimming areas in rivers instead of pools to save on supervision		17,500 – 20,000	\$87,500 - \$100,000
Ocean baths are being considered instead of a pool where no supervision is provided to save money		20,000 – 22,500	\$100,000 - \$112,500
Council wants to improve visitation rates, financial performance etc with minimum expenditure		22,500 – 25,000	\$112,500 - \$125,000
		25,000 & over	> \$125,000

Once the reasons have been identified and scored it is recommended a risk assessment be undertaken to consider all the positive and negative outcomes for the community and council.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

15 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Understanding the Facility

In managing any facility, it is important to know exactly what it is you are managing.

The council should select and document an appropriate methodology to help determine the key factors that will impact on its operations.

According to the OLG's Practice Note 15 – Water Safety, some of the factors to be considered are:

- Number of patrons.
- Characteristics of patrons, for example, age and swimming ability.
- Design of the facility and the impact this has on visual surveillance of patrons.
- Size and shape of pools.
- Nature of activities available such as diving towers and water slides, aqua aerobics, and learn to swim classes.
- Work health and safety issues for employees and/or contractors.

This information is similarly addressed in the "Statewide Mutual Best Practice Manual – Signs as Remote Supervision", where reference is made to the Development, Frequency of Use and Population Ratings, which result in the calculation of a Facility Visitation Rating (FVR).

The Facility Visitation Rate is extremely useful in determining staffing levels and signage requirements.

It is important this information is recorded and kept within the corporate document management system for future reference. It should be regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains current and relevant.

Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment

Engaging an independent third-party to undertake a facility assessment is the most effective way to gain an accurate evaluation of the level of safety and compliance within a facility. A comprehensive assessment, conducted by a trained professional, evaluates the operations of the facility against relevant guidelines, standards, and legislation.

The resulting report assists organisations in planning, resourcing, and implementing necessary changes to enhance safety and compliance. Periodic assessments are strongly recommended for all aquatic facilities.

Aquatic Best Practice Safety Services offers an excellent wholistic assessment of aquatic facilities.

Aquatic Best Practice Safety Services – Nick Au

0419 423 775

Nick.au@aquaticbp.com.au

Website: aquaticbestpractice.com.au

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

16 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Supervision (Staffing/Resourcing)

Section 6 of the OLG's Practice Note 15 – Water Safety covers the "Number of trained water safety personnel" that should be on hand. Council must carefully determine their own level of staffing requirements for each facility.

The GSPO makes recommendations in relation to the minimum supervision requirements. It suggests possible ratios for lifeguards to people in the water, considering such issues as line of sight, pool shapes and sizes and patronage numbers. It also recommends a risk assessment should be conducted before establishing the appropriate lifeguard ratio.

If council opts to provide unsupervised or limited supervision facilities, it must be vigilant to ensure it has clearly followed a risk management approach and considered all relevant factors.

Should council wish to delegate supervision to a contractor, community group or individual volunteers, it must ensure systems are in place to clearly identify, document and maintain appropriate supervision levels by trained and qualified persons.

Council must ensure accurate records are kept supporting any decision made or control measure implemented.

Note: it is not the preferred option of Statewide Mutual or the RLSSA for councils to provide unsupervised facilities.

See also Signage section

GSPO – Bather Supervision SU1

Training/Qualifications

Statewide acknowledges the OLG's Practice Note 15 – Water Safety offers valuable guidance on this matter although some requirements have been superseded or are no longer relevant. For the current list of skillsets, please refer to [Training.gov.au](https://www.training.gov.au).

It is necessary for staff to receive additional internal or external training to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. Records should be kept for all training completed, together with any expiry dates and refresher training requirements. Coronial findings underscore the necessity and significance of professional development, including internal and external on-the-job training, to enhance the knowledge and skills of aquatic staff, particularly lifeguards. Investigations into drownings have highlighted that mere qualification without ongoing training is insufficient in recognition and effective response.

The importance of facility-specific, in-service training sessions cannot be overstated. Staff working in seasonal pools should attend a facility-specific in-service training session at the aquatic facility where they work shortly before each season begins, and at least every three months thereafter until the season ends. Staff working at year-round pools should attend a minimum of four organised in-service training sessions per year to maintain current skills and further develop necessary competencies.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

17 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Advertising an Unsupervised Pool

If council chooses to make a pool unsupervised it is recommended to utilise various media options to ensure the public are made aware that no lifeguarding services are provided at the facility. This may be done by various means including:

- Advertising in the local paper.
- Council's website.
- Social media.
- Signage at the entry to the facility.
- Notice board memos.
- Community group or committee meetings.
- Pool induction and access card agreement application processes.

Signage

Signage is a valuable tool in providing guidance to facility users, demonstrating council's duty of care to its users, and managing council's public liability risks. This is particularly relevant for facilities without on-site supervision.

Council is encouraged to refer to the Statewide Mutual "Best Practice Manual – Signs as Remote Supervision" to assist in the development of appropriate signage.

It is important signage is determined through a structured risk assessment to identify all hazards and associated risks. Based on this assessment, the Council should focus on the risks rated as HIGH or above and establish appropriate symbols to warn against these hazards. It is recommended councils utilise Statewide Mutual's Signs as Remote Supervision Best Practice Manual for this purpose.

It is recommended councils adopt a signs policy which clearly states its position in relation to the style, type, and size of signage to be applied.

Additional signage, as recommended by the GSPO and compliant with Australian and ISO standards, will be required. Plant room placarding must also adhere to the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017*.

Entry signage will provide potential visitors with all the information they require to make an informed decision before entering the facility as to whether the facility is suitable for them or people under their care.

Council should ensure the signage at the entrance is clearly visible to people before they enter the facility and accurately informs patrons of their and councils' responsibilities.

Note - signage is in lieu of supervision therefore it should clearly convey any information a pool staff member would be able to provide.

Information to be included on the entry signs may include but not be limited to the following:

- The name of the facility.
- The address of the facility.
- The hours of operation.
- How to gain entry.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

18 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



- Supervision provided e.g., none, partial or between the hours of.
- If restricted supervision, then the hours of supervision should be clearly conveyed.
- Emergency contact arrangements (if unsupervised location).
- Children under ten (10) years must be constantly accompanied by an adult while in the aquatic area of the Facility. (Council to determine if this age is 10 or higher)
- Children under five (5) years must be constantly supervised by an appropriate parent/guardian who is prepared to swim. Adequate supervision requires the parent/guardian to accompany the child in the water and remain within arm's reach of the child at all times.
- Any prohibition and hazard symbols identified by risk assessment and in keeping with the adopted signage policy requirements (highlights potential hazards and conveys expected level of acceptable conduct of users).
- Information symbols and emergency information.
- Patron's responsibilities.

Please refer to the GSPO 14.3 for additional information regarding Entry Policies.

Keep in mind facilities signage requirements are individual and need to be assessed using the Best Practice Manual – Signs as Remote Supervision.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

19 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Council should assess requirements for additional signage placements within the pool grounds, change rooms and pool concourse. The general information entry sign, no diving and no lifeguard on duty signs should be easily visible from any area in the facility.

Councils need to ensure that all communications and signage throughout the venue convey the same rules and guidelines consistently, preventing any confusion or contradictions. (We often see councils implement the 'keep watch at public pools policy' which conflicts with the age for supervision on the terms and conditions signage).

It is recommended all signage details for each swimming facility be maintained within a signage register. This will ensure staff are aware of how many signs should be in place and the detail of each sign. Signage requirements, just like procedures and risk assessments, should be routinely reviewed to ensure they are current in content, and are effective.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

20 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Depth Markers

Depth Markers should highlight the changes in gradient, particularly in depths less than 1.6 metres. This will minimise the opportunity for poor or weak swimmers to get out of their depth.

All depth markers should be shown in metric measurements, with numerals and letters a minimum of 100mm in height.

Markings should be placed in a position where they can be seen from within the body of water and from the pool concourse. Where possible, depth markers should be co-located with water advisory symbols.

A diagram showing a vertical double-headed arrow on the left with the text '100mm' next to it. To the right of the arrow is the text '1.8m' in a large, bold, black font.

Water Advisory Signs

Individual hazard and regulation Signs

Individual hazard signs should be used where localised risks warrant signage, accompanied by relevant regulations. Signs should clearly communicate warnings and restrictions based on water depth and gradient changes.



Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

21 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Sign Requirements	Advisory Sign
In water depth of 1.2 metres or less the following signs / symbols should be used	<div></div> <div>Shallow Water No Diving</div>
In water depth of 1.2 metres to 1.8 metres the following signs / symbols should be used	<div></div> <div>No Diving</div>
In water 1.8 metres deep or more the following signs / symbols should be used	<div></div> <div>Deep Water</div>
When a gradient change is more than 1:14 the following signs/symbols should be used	<div></div> <div>Sudden Drop</div>



Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024



Mandatory and Emergency Signage

Mandatory signage should be used where instruction is necessary, while emergency signs should indicate the nearest safety facilities.



Placement and Visibility

All signage should be positioned within natural lines of sight, approximately 5° up or down from a point 1500 mm above ground level for adult observers. Freestanding or overhead signs should be strategically placed to avoid obstruction and hazards.

Diving

Due to the potential for injury by diving in shallow water, RLSSA, as part of the GSPO, has developed the following guidelines specific for recreational diving:

- SU23 – Supervision of Diving Towers and Springboards Recreational
- SU 21 - Supervision of Diving Recreational
- Safe Water Entry for Competition –Competitive Dive Starts SU22

In relation to recreational swimming, diving must not be permitted in water depth of less than 1.8m from the side of the pool, or 2.0m if from starting blocks.

Diving may only be permitted in depths less than the above, for competition or training squads, provided all participants have received instruction and been warned of the depths (*Refer SU22 for more detail*). To assist with management of this, signage, with words to the effect, "*Warning: Dive Entries Permitted by Trained Swimmers under Supervision Only*", should be erected.

Where the pool has been sectioned off to separate recreational from the competition/training or learn to swim groups, the pool should be managed as a pool where diving shall not be permitted in water depth of less than 1.8m from the side of the pool, or 2.0m if from starting blocks. It is not desirable to have one group diving and the other not diving at the same time in the same pool.

It is strongly recommended competition entry forms, lease and hire agreements be amended to contain reference to diving restrictions.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

23 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Diving into shallow water has resulted in numerous serious injuries and remains one of the highest risks.

Statewide strongly suggests signage state no diving is allowed in unsupervised pools.

Facility Access

It is recommended access to the facility be restricted to daylight hours. This will minimise unwanted behaviour and maximise the number of people at the facility at any given time which could help in an emergency.

The facility should not just have an open gate, entry should be restricted in some manner. The use of personal access gates via an electronic entry system and turnstile gates have been effectively employed at some unsupervised pools.

We suggest councils also consider promoting the importance of a buddy system. Even excellent swimmers can encounter difficulties, so it is crucial always to swim with a buddy. A buddy can call for help or perform a rescue if needed.

Below are the recommendations for supervision of children. Statewide recommends councils consider these recommendations as a minimum requirement and undertake a risk assessment to determine if they are comfortable with these. Councils can always increase the ages.

A child is defined as being under 18 years of age in NSW. However, for the purposes of Mandatory Reporting, a child is defined as someone being under 16 years of age. Taking this into account, Councils should consider anyone under 15 years should be actively supervised by a parent or carer over 18 years.

As a minimum in NSW council's should be adopting the RLSSA Keep Watch criteria:

- 0-5 YEAR OLDS & NON-SWIMMERS: Stay within arms' reach
- 6-10 YEAR OLDS & WEAK SWIMMERS: Be close, be prepared & maintain constant visual contact
- 11-14 YEAR OLDS: Maintain visual contact

It is also important for councils to develop a child safety policy for the venue, especially if the pool will be unstaffed. This policy should address site-specific measures to ensure the safety of children while visiting the facility.

Where feasible, councils should consider swim testing and health screening applicants for access cards. Members should also complete an induction program at the start of each season, covering site layout, emergency procedures, basic water safety, rescue response and safe use of facilities and equipment.

Aquatic Best Practice Safety Services has worked with councils to implement these types of systems during the winter months when the venue is unstaffed, and it has proven to be both feasible and effective.

It is recommended access cards only be issued to people over a certain age. We strongly recommend 15 years or older or to carers 18 years who have children under 14 years or others under their care.

The card should provide access to a maximum of 4 people whose names will appear on the card.

Statewide recommends anyone under 14 years and anyone over 14 years whose swimming ability is not to standard have a parent, guardian or carer in attendance who is actively supervising them.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

24 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



It is up to councils to determine the age of people it will issue access cards too, and the number of people whose names will be allowed on the cards.

The person applying for the access card and anyone they are intending to include on the card under their care should only be issued their access cards upon attending council where they receive a pool induction, pay a fee for the card and sign the agreement.

Please seek legal advice regarding the final wording of any access agreements.

Emergency Management

As a public venue, staff should be aware of the obligations to maintain a safe environment for all users. All staff should be trained in what to do in an emergency.

Where the facility is unstaffed, consider at a minimum for use by untrained bystanders, a rescue tube, automated external defibrillator and first aid kit.

The types of emergency situations may include (but not be limited to) the following:

- Natural disasters – lightning / hail / storm.
- Contamination of water.
- Drowning / rescue.
- Spinal injury or death.
- Heart attack / medical emergency.
- Equipment failure - plant room / leak.
- Fire / robbery.
- Electrical failure.
- Major chemical spill / gas leak.
- Bomb threat.
- Inappropriate Behaviour.

If any emergency situations should be brought to the attention of potential patrons, those situations should be included in the induction, applicants should be trained in the use of any equipment provided, any actions communicated, safety equipment made readily available and inductions signed by both parties.

Emergency plans should be reviewed and tested annually. Councils should prepare an emergency response plan in conjunction with key stakeholders and local emergency services. For unsupervised sites, the plan should enable patrons to safely evacuate the facility using clearly marked signage.

Refer RLSSA GSPO – Emergency Action Plan GO2

Ensuring the public can request assistance in emergencies is crucial. Therefore, councils should explore the feasibility of using technology to address incidents at aquatic venues. Examples of emergency response systems include:

- Landline with limited outgoing calls to local emergency services.
- Duress alarm systems that send signals to a monitoring center 24/7. They should be marked and displayed prominently

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

25 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



- Publicly Accessible Defibrillator Monitoring Cabinets: Monitored cabinets ensure secure and functional defibrillators, some with surveillance and alert capabilities.
- Electronic surveillance: used to monitor all provision of the aquatic facility including both entry and exit points but excluding change rooms and bathrooms. The surveillance system should include a safety alert system that has the capacity to be monitored by a third party who has the authority to alert emergency services.

Inspections

Regular inspections should be conducted, and records kept. It is recommended checklists be developed to ensure relevant items are noted and inspected. The frequency of inspection (hourly, daily, weekly, monthly etc) should also be determined.

OLG and RLSSA Guidelines should be used to determine the type and frequency of inspections. Other inspection frequencies and times should be determined by risk assessment.

The items to be inspected could include but not be limited to the following:

- Water surveillance.
- Plant room.
- Concourse.
- Change rooms/toilet area.
- First aid room.
- Grounds.
- Kiosk.
- Reception.
- Signs.
- Storage rooms.
- Recreational equipment.
- Office area.
- Outside areas.
- Emergency equipment.
- Lane ropes and starting platforms.
- Other.

The checklist should clearly identify the following:

- Location.
- Date and time inspected.
- Condition of asset.
- actions taken.
- further comments.
- initialled by the officer concerned.

Once completed checklists should be forwarded to the pool manager at the end of each day.

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Pages/public-pools-and-spas.aspx>

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

26 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Water Quality Testing

If councils choose to operate unsupervised swimming pools, this does not reduce the requirement for water testing. The same testing regime must be upheld as for supervised facilities.

For chlorinated public swimming pools, council must ensure the maintenance of the pool water to acceptable parameters.

A systematic and regimented program of testing must be in place. This program should be well documented and staff must hold a Nationally Recognised Statement of Attainment SISS00131 - Aquatic Technical Operator.

Where the water in a swimming facility is not chlorinated, such as an ocean pool relying on tidal refreshing of the water, or an enclosure in a river or other "natural" feature, Council should develop and implement a process of monitoring and testing, to be satisfied the water quality is consistent with standards for human contact. Guidance in this regard can be found from the National Health and Medical Research Council's Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water 2008, from Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Council should ensure procedures are in place to enable staff to respond appropriately to unacceptable test results. In situations where the swimming facility relies on natural processes to maintain the quality of the water and impacts on those natural processes are causing the deterioration of the water quality in the swimming facility, (for example, from low sea swell reducing refreshing of an ocean pool, or flooding / pollution in a river) it may be necessary to close the swimming facility until water quality returns to an acceptable level. This will require monitoring and testing to establish when the water is suitable for human contact.

Practice Note 15 – Water Safety and the NSW Department of Health, Guidelines for Public Swimming Pools and Spa Pools - draft 2022 provide advice and assistance in the management of water testing.

Those Guidelines will assist public swimming pool and spa pool operators to meet the requirements of the Public Health Act 2010 and Public Health Regulation 2022 and to manage public health risks. The Guidelines also provides advice to local and state government environmental health officers to help fulfil their regulatory and advisory roles.

NSW Health recommends public swimming pools and spa pools use a swimming pool risk management plan to help protect public health, especially if using a water supply other than from mains drinking water such as rainwater or other raw water supply that complies with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

NSW Health's Swimming Pool Risk Management Plan template in conjunction with the NSW Guide for Developing a Swimming Pool Risk Management Plan 2022 can be used to develop a plan.

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Pages/public-pools-and-spas.aspx>

Water Slides, Diving Boards, Floating Recreational Items

It is not recommended for any water slides, diving boards or floating recreational devices to be allowed in unsupervised pools.

Development of operational procedures, together with direct supervision of a water slide whilst operational, is considered the minimum requirement.



Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

27 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Operational procedures should be in place, and staff trained in the correct installation, management and removal of floating recreational items. This includes correct anchoring in accordance with manufacturers specifications.

All water slides, diving boards and floating recreational items should be subject to regular inspection and maintenance, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Council should keep and maintain appropriate records to demonstrate the existence of a system. If manufacturer's instructions are unavailable, then a risk management approach based on local risk factors should be used to determine inspection and maintenance schedules.

Refer also to Supervision (Staffing/Resourcing) and RLSSA GSPO:

- SV22 – Supervision of Inflatable Play Equipment.
- SV25 - Supervision of Interactive Water Play Equipment.
- SV21 - Supervision of Floating Play Equipment.
- SV30 - Supervision of Water Slides.

Water Play Parks and Other Recreational Aquatic Structure

The Public Health Regulations 2022 define a water play park as follows:

26 Water play parks

For the Act, section 34, definition of public swimming pool or spa pool, a water play park or other recreational aquatic structure is declared not to be a public swimming pool or spa pool if it—

- (a) *uses a public water supply, and*
- (b) *does not use a recirculation system, and*
- (c) *does not store water.*

Should these facilities use a recirculation system or store water then they are deemed to be a public swimming pool under the Public Health Act 2010 and Public Health Regulations 2022 and the requirements of such should be considered.

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/browse/inforce>

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Pages/public-pools-and-spas.aspx>

Shaded Areas, Playgrounds and BBQ/Picnic Areas

All swimming facilities should provide sufficient shaded areas for patrons, such as grandstands, shade sails, change rooms and shelters.

Council may also wish to erect shade over areas such as the toddler pool and playground equipment (if applicable).

Council should refer to the NSW Cancer Council publications, "Under Cover: Guidelines for Shade Planning and Design" and "Guidelines for Outdoor Events" for further advice.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

28 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



It is recommended any additional items such as playgrounds, BBQs, tables, seats, shade sails etc. be included in councils overall asset inventory. Alternatively, the asset inventory for these items could be included in the Facility Operations Manual if values do not warrant inclusion in council's overall asset management system.

Regular inspections should be carried out by appropriately trained staff and routine maintenance should be conducted in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Pool staff may be trained to conduct basic visual inspections of playground equipment and other assets, in additions to those regular inspections scheduled.

Records must be kept for all types of inspections and maintenance, and it is recommended these be kept in councils' corporate records system.

Playgrounds and picnic areas should be positioned away from bodies of water. Appropriate measures such as fencing and signage for parental supervision should be installed to reduce the risk of unsupervised and unintentional entry into the water.

Disabled Access

Where disabled access is provided to the pool, then the appropriate legislation and standard dealing with the issue needs to be addressed.

If mechanical devices are used to lift disabled persons into or out of the pool, then records should be kept concerning any maintenance and inspections undertaken.

It is recommended for unsupervised pools to discuss with patrons who have disabilities, any requirements and carer supervision they may require prior to using the facility.

Refer to:

- RLSSA GSPO – Supervision of People with Disabilities SU12
- AS 3979:2006 Hydrotherapy Pools
- AS 1428 (Set) 2003 – Design for Access and Mobility SET.1Shade

First Aid

The RLSSA GSPO – Content of First Aid Rooms FA3 provides details which are above the minimum required under the *NSW Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011*. It is recommended councils adopt the RLSSA list.

It is also recommended where the facility is unstaffed, consider at a minimum for use by untrained by-standers a rescue tube, automated external defibrillator and first aid kit. The first aid kit should be prominently placed and marked appropriately. Signage with clearly marked emergency contact details and a functioning telephone should be kept in close proximity to the first aid kit.

A system must be implemented to ensure sufficient stock of first aid equipment in accordance with relevant State legislation/regulations.

Council should consider implementing a system for reporting of incidents and injuries with the unsupervised facility,

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

29 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Lease Agreements/Hire Agreements

Some unsupervised pools will only be used for recreation by the public. Others may attract commercial activities such as:

- learn to swim classes;
- squad training;
- adult coaching;
- aqua aerobics; and
- physical therapy.

There are various operating models to be considered which may include having someone onsite who is lifeguard trained. This might only cover high use times.

Lease agreements should be completed for any lease arrangement relating to the facility. Such leases may be for the management and operation of the facility and/or for the kiosk or other associated part thereof. This lease should clearly cover the scope including the allocation of the operational responsibility and authority, and the measures to monitor performance and compliance to the agreement.

Some things to consider within the scope of the lease for the management and operation of the facility include:

- Minimum staffing numbers.
- Responsibility for, and frequency of maintenance, inspection and water testing activities.
- Compliance with legislation, standards, industry guidelines (including audits).
- Administration (insurance, bookings, record keeping).
- Releases/indemnities in the event of personal injury, death, damage or loss of property .
- Operating manuals and other documentation requirements.
- Hours of operation.

Where a third party has the operational management responsibility for a swimming facility, it is recommended a condition be written into the lease requiring the contractor to submit to a regular audit of their systems/operation. This audit could be undertaken by council or an independent third party such as RLSSA.

A lease agreement should also be considered for the swimming clubs. They may have club rooms allocated to them and may store their own records, trophies and equipment on site.

Hire agreements should be completed and signed in relation to one off and regular users such as schools, professional coaches, and community groups. This should also stipulate their responsibility, authority and accountability in relation to the participants under their control and in relation to the facility itself (litter control, supervision, diving etc). An example of a hire agreement is incorporated in this document as Attachment 1.

Insurance requirements should be clearly stipulated and required for both lease and hire agreements (check with your JLT Account Manager for recommended minimum coverage requirements).

For an example of a Lease / Hire Agreement please refer to the Statewide Mutual Swimming Pools Best Practice Manual.

Please seek legal advice regarding the final wording of any lease or hire agreements.

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

30 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



Documentation/Record Keeping

Accurate and detailed records should be maintained and kept for each facility. All records remain the property of the responsible facility controller (council or contracted swimming facility manager).

The types of records to be kept may include but not limited to:

- Training and qualifications of staff (external and internal training records).
- Inspections (daily, weekly, monthly etc).
- Incident reports (including first aid reports).
- Maintenance records (plant and equipment, mechanical lifting devices, amusement devices).
- Water quality testing.
- Lease agreements (facility management, kiosk, swimming clubs).
- Hire Agreements (schools, professional coaches, community groups etc).
- Risk assessments.
- Operations manual, procedures and policies.
- Timesheets.
- Attendance records (number of patrons in facility, number of patrons in the water).

In the case of council run swimming pools, all original documents completed at their pools should be registered and maintained within the corporate records system.

Where management of the swimming facility rests with a third party, council should ensure requirements for the safekeeping of all relevant information concerning the facility are equally applied to the contractor. This requirement should be addressed within the lease agreement and may be verified via an audit process.

Targeted Public Awareness and Education Strategy

Councils should consider developing and implementing public water safety education and awareness strategies to reshape community perceptions and increase awareness of aquatic recreation risks.

Key elements crucial for effective education and awareness strategies include:

- Consistent safety messaging to eliminate confusion and ensure clarity.
- Regular and ongoing provision of information at consistent locations and times.
- Long-term continuity in information delivery, rather than one-time efforts.

The following are examples and suggestions of current strategies used in aquatic environments to enhance public awareness and encourage behavioural changes:

Education Programs: comprehensive programs covering various aspects of aquatic activities, emphasizing water safety, rescue techniques, and CPR across all age groups.

Promotion of Swimming and Water Safety Programs: encouraging water familiarisation, safety practices, stroke techniques, and personal development in safe environments, with tailored classes for different ages and swimming abilities.

Multisectoral Collaboration: building partnerships with local schools, water safety organisations, media outlets, water management authorities, and tourism sectors to develop and implement cohesive water safety

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

31 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



education strategies. Collaboration ensures diverse efforts contribute to reducing drowning incidents and promoting safer aquatic environments.

Education Signage: placing informative signs strategically in high-traffic areas to provide site-specific information and key water safety guidelines. Signage should complement, not compete with, regulatory or hazard warning signs.

Quick Response (QR) Codes: utilising QR codes around aquatic sites to deliver location-based safety messages and additional detailed information. These codes facilitate easy access to water-related safety details via smartphone scanning, potentially offering multilingual support.

CALD Community Education: targeting culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities with tailored water safety communications. Addressing language barriers, swimming proficiency, and differing perceptions of water safety is crucial through structured educational programs and information dissemination.

Community groups stand to benefit from a range of structured and informal educational initiatives, focusing on acquiring survival skills, self-rescue techniques, and safe methods for assisting others in water emergencies while minimizing personal risk.

Establishment of a Public Water Safety Management Plan

A Water Safety Management Plan is essential for effectively managing public safety around council swimming pools within the LGA and ensuring the upkeep of infrastructure and natural areas. It is recommended that Councils consider developing, implementing, and evaluating such a plan for all aquatic environments within their LGA.

The Management Plan should be crafted through extensive consultation with stakeholders, including local government authorities, state agencies, emergency services, community groups (including CALD communities), and safety organisations.

The primary objective of the Public Water Safety Management Plan should prioritise life preservation and injury prevention, including:

- Establishing a framework for regular inspections and risk assessments to identify environmental hazards.
- Identifying high-risk sites, particularly focusing on drowning prevention.
- Allocating resources to areas with the greatest need to enhance community water safety.
- Coordinating efforts among stakeholders, including those currently not involved.
- Increasing awareness among visitors and the broader community through strategic education and programs.
- Outlining safety requirements for events held at unsupervised locations.
- Informing research priorities by identifying data gaps and intervention opportunities.
- Designating responsibilities for inspecting and maintaining safety-related infrastructure.
- Setting criteria for safe swimming conditions and water quality monitoring.
- Establishing operational hours for the swimming pools (seasonal/daily).
- Continuous monitoring and periodic reviews of the Water Safety Management Plan are vital to identifying and managing new risks promptly. Regular reviews should be integrated into the management cycle and supplemented with comprehensive evaluations at specified intervals (e.g. annually).

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

32 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



REFERENCES

- Royal Life Saving Society Australia - Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation 2019
- Civil Liability Act 2002
- Local Government Act 1993
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017
- Public Health Act 2010
- Public Health Regulation 2022
- AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management - Guidelines
- AS 2416:2010 – Water safety signs and beach safety flags
- AS 3979:2006 – Hydrotherapy Pools
- AS 1428 (Set) 2003 – Design for Access and Mobility SET
- AS 3533.4.5:2017 Part 4.5 – Specific requirements – Waterborne inflatables
- NSW Department of Health Guideline Public Swimming Pools and Spas – draft 2022
- Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation – RLSSA 2019
- General Operations
- Emergency Action Plan GO2
- Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water (National Health and Medical Research Council) 2008
- Under Cover – Guidelines for Shade Planning and Design (NSW Cancer Council)
- Guidelines for Outdoor Events (NSW Cancer Council)
- Practice Note 15 – Water Safety (Office of Local Government)
- Statewide Mutual Best Practice Manual – Signs as Remote Supervision
- Statewide Mutual Best Practice Manual – Gathering Information
- Statewide Mutual Best Practice Manual – Swimming Pools
- Statewide Mutual CIP Self-assessment – Swimming Pools

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

33 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



SAMPLE DOCUMENT LINKS

[Statewide Mutual](#)

[Office of Local Government](#)

[Royal Life Saving Society Australia](#)

[Aquatic and Recreation Institute](#)

[NSW Cancer Council](#)

[Australasian Legal Information Institute](#)

[National Health and Medical Research Council](#)

[NSW Health](#)

Acknowledgements

The Statewide Mutual Board of Management appreciate the valuable assistance given by Nick Au of Aquatic Best Practice Safety Services, who helped in the development of this document.

Aquatic Best Practice Safety Services – Nick Au

0419 423 775

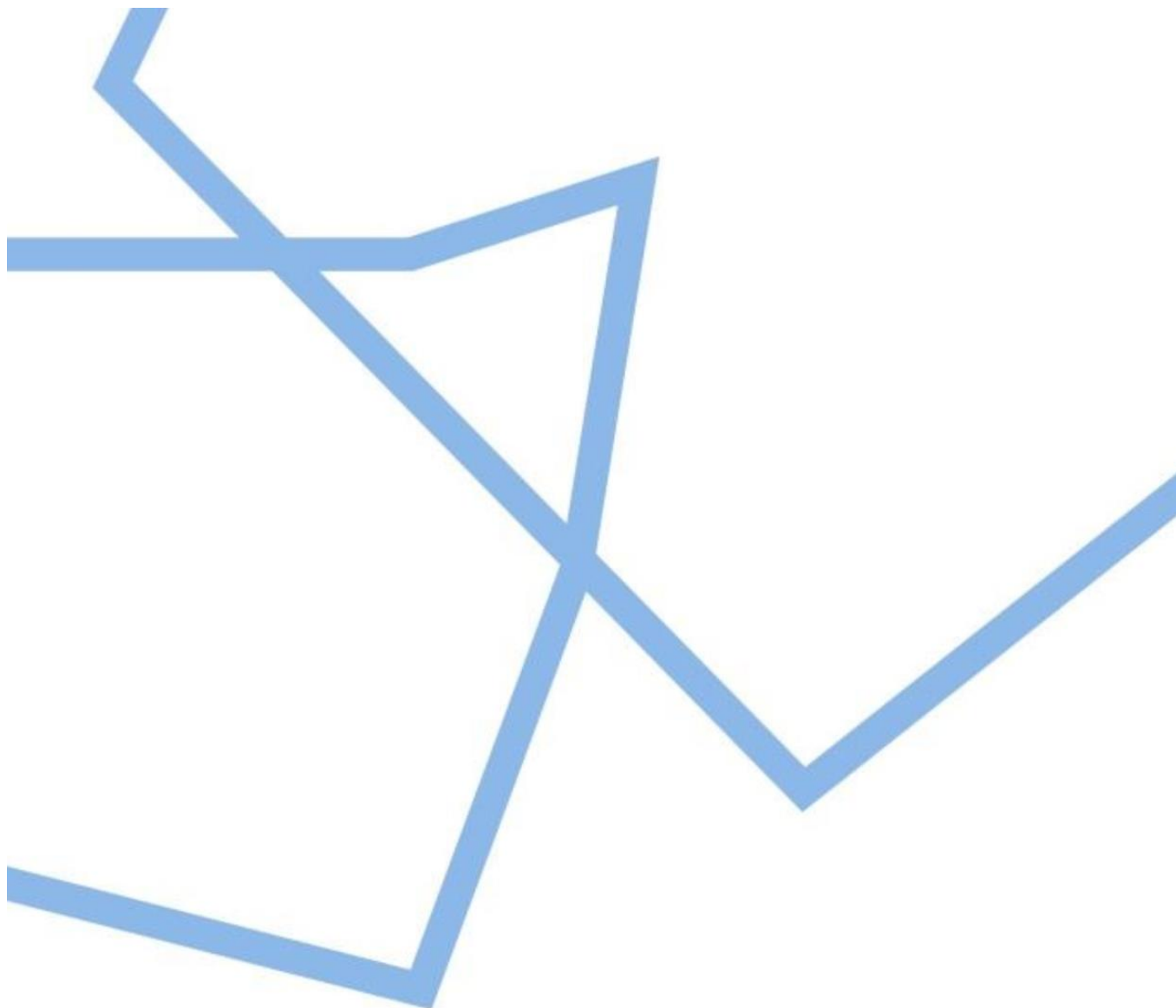
Nick.au@aquaticbp.com.au

Website: aquaticbestpractice.com.au

Document Title: Guidance Note – Unsupervised Swimming Pools Management
Version: 1 | Effective version date: August 2024

34 of 35

Document currency not guaranteed when printed or saved.



CONTACTS

Executive Officer
Statewide Mutual
PO Box 176
Australia Square NSW 1215
mail@statewide.nsw.gov.au
www.statewide.nsw.gov.au