

# WHS RISK ASSESSMENT FISHING

Workplace Health and Safety  
SA GOVERNMENT

## WHS General Risk Assessment template

Site name and ID No	Port Noarlunga Aquatic Centre			
<b>Title, description and location of activity</b>	<p><b>Activity Description</b></p> <p>Fishing instruction is conducted at Noarlunga on the Onkaparinga river or in the Spencer gulf in the semi protected waters of Port Noarlunga. Students will receive instruction commensurate with program length and student age/maturity on the following:</p> <p>Personal equipment: Fishing rod with either a hook or a squid jag - their role and the correct selection together with a waterproof jacket if conditions require.</p> <p>Safety: Safe fishing site selection, safety signals and communication, consideration of weather /wind and general conditions.</p> <p>Skills: Selection of rod, carrying rods safely to the fishing site together with other required equipment – bait esky, hook/sinker box and burley bucket. Handling bait, attaching bait to hook and casting. Use of the bail arm on the rod. . Untangling line, rigging rod, selection of hook and sinker. Basic knots. Reeling in a fish, understanding legal size and how to return a fish to the water. Understanding bag limit and how to leave a fishing site at the end of the session.</p> <p><b>General Safety consideration</b></p> <p>Instructors will carry a radio to the fishing site along with a rescue tube.</p> <p>Known hazards will be identified to all participants.</p> <p>Students will be required to wear, hat, sunscreen, shirt that covers their shoulders and trousers or shorts along with adequate footwear.</p> <p>A knowledge and understanding by instructional staff of local fishing conditions (such as tidal variations, current flow, where the fish like to hide), and climatic conditions specific to the fishing site (such as strong off-shore winds or sudden large waves).</p> <p>A knowledge and awareness by instructional staff of additional local hazards such as general community water craft activity, the presence of marine hazards.</p> <p>All instructional staff and students will be aware of the centres emergency procedure and protocols. .</p> <p>All student participants will have completed a detailed medical form to be considered and checked by staff prior to the commencement of any activity.</p> <p>All student participants with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma) will carry or have available their medication at all times.</p> <p>Staff and participating students will be clearly and easily identifiable. . As this activity is often conducted some distance from the PNA base an effective method of communication should be carried by instructors e.g. 2-way radio or mobile phone.</p> <p>All centres will have available at all times a well-equipped first aid kit.</p>			
<b>Risk Assessment done by:</b>	Name	Position	Date of Assessment	Review Due (3 years)
	Andrew Hancock	Instructor in Charge	November 2020	November 2023
	Elizabeth Ellinger	Senior Instructor		



<b>Hazard identification</b> (What is the issue of concern?)	<b>Risk Controls</b> (What are you doing to eliminate or reduce the risk?)	<b>Risk</b> (With all controls in place)
1. Student suffers from a medical condition, (pre-existing e.g. Asthma attack or developed e.g. Nausea, sea sickness) whilst conducting an activity on the water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No student is permitted to be involved in an activity unless a medical form has been completed and sighted by centre staff.</li> <li>• All instructional staff aware of the location of completed medical forms for their group/school.</li> <li>• Medication for pre-existing conditions is carried with/by the student in a water-proof container.</li> <li>• Instructional staff carry (or have ready access to) a suitably equipped first aid kit, including spare asthma inhaler.</li> <li>• Students with known medical conditions are more closely monitored by both Aquatics Centre staff and supervising school staff. Students diagnosed with Epilepsy must have 1:1 supervision.</li> <li>• Appropriate first aid is sought as a matter of priority once a medical emergency has been identified. Rescue craft used if a rapid transfer is required.</li> <li>• Where an activity is conducted some distance from the main centre, 2-way radio/mobile telephone contact will be maintained with the aquatics centre/I/C or nominee).</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
2. Accident/injury on walk to and from river (when needing to access by road).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group kept together and under control.</li> <li>• Instructor goes to middle of road and instructs students on when to cross.</li> <li>• Everyone walking on the footpath.</li> <li>• Remind students to be alert in the car park.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
3 Snake bite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any snake sighting is reported and noted on the white board.</li> <li>• Instructors keep sharp look out.</li> <li>• First aid kit and phone available.</li> <li>• If bite suspected ambulance will be called and instructors will apply first aid principles.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
4. Damage to equipment through incorrect use. Poor/inappropriate student behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct use of all equipment is demonstrated and reinforced through supervision. Correct fit of all personal equipment (e.g. wetsuits) to avoid “over stretching” or damage.</li> <li>• Student behaviour expectations and consequences are clearly established prior to the commencement of the activity and reinforced throughout instruction. Poor or unsafe student behaviour – student returned to shore for a period as determined by the instructor. Referral to school supervising teacher if required for further discipline.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
5. Student suffers injury from rod	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students briefed on the correct way to carry rods.</li> <li>• Students to stand at least a rod length apart when fishing.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>

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6. Student suffers injury from hook or squid jag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students instructed on how to anchor the hook of a rod in an eyelet when they are not fishing.</li> <li>Students instructed on the correct method of baiting up.</li> <li>Instructors to demonstrate baiting up at the start of the lesson.</li> <li>Students instructed to cast underarm on the jetty only.</li> <li>When casting over-arm students to be aware of where other people are and the effects of the wind on the hook and sinker.</li> </ul>	Medium
7. Infection through equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students instructed to thoroughly wash hands after handling bait and before eating especially if the bait is red meat.</li> <li>Hand gel to be carried in hook/sinker box</li> </ul>	Medium
8. Student suffers injury from fish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students briefed on the difficulties of removing fish from a line and how to do so for different species.</li> <li>Instructors to closely monitor students removing fish from line</li> </ul>	Medium
9. Student suffers sunburn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students briefed at the commencement of the session re. being sunsmart.</li> <li>Sunscreen be made available the school, with regular breaks provided to reapply.</li> <li>Students to wear hats (preferably broad brimmed) and either a wetsuit or shirt (preferably long sleeved) and shorts.</li> </ul>	Medium
10. Hypothermia/Hyperthermia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructional staff to be aware of weather forecast for the day and plan accordingly.</li> <li>Students to dress appropriate to the conditions and season. Cold Conditions: Wetsuits preferable, regular breaks to warm up. Hot conditions: students to wear long sleeved shirts, hats and sunscreen applied at regular intervals. Regular hydration breaks.</li> <li>Condition of all students be closely monitored, and early/first signs of hypo/hyperthermia be recognised and promptly treated.</li> </ul>	Medium
11. Student suffers from dehydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are encouraged to drink water before starting session especially on hot days.</li> <li>Drinking water carried to lesson area if possible.</li> </ul>	Medium
12. Student suffers or is affected by exhaustion/fatigue/soft tissue injury e.g. Muscle strain or cramp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All instructional staff to continuously monitor students and be alert for students showing signs of fatigue, minor injury, or cramp.</li> <li>Instructors create frequent rest/recovery breaks commensurate with the age/skill level of the group.</li> <li>Students instructed as to the most appropriate method of signalling for assistance if required.</li> </ul>	Medium

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13 Injury sustained by student from objects above the water such as cuts, abrasions, crushes with fixed objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazardous fixtures identified (rocks, partially submerged pieces of wood, jetty pylons) and students instructed to remain clear.</li> <li>• Minor cuts and abrasions from contact with objects be treated promptly to reduce the likelihood of infection.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
14. Injury to student from underwater object such buried fishing hook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students to wear footwear when at the river.</li> <li>• Areas which are used by fisherman clearly identified and avoided where possible.</li> <li>• Any injuries are treated promptly to reduce the likelihood of infection</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
15. Marine creature danger – blue ringed octopus, crabs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructors to remain vigilant for marine creature hazards and evacuate students from the area at the first sign of danger.</li> <li>• Students instructed not to put their fingers into holes or crevices when fishing just north of the jetty.</li> <li>• Students instructed to “look.....don’t touch</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
16 Students unable to hear instructions/commands due to wind direction, sound of the sea or distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students briefed in the initial safety address regarding appropriate signalling method prior to starting the session. This will include the use of a whistle, or arm signals/visual commands. An emergency evacuation procedure and signal will also be established at the safety address.</li> <li>• Students encouraged to remain near the instructor.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
17 Student goes missing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructors conduct regular checks and head counts.</li> <li>• Students likely to disappear have been identified by the school and extra support put in place.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
18 Loss of group control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class ratio kept within guidelines.</li> <li>• Students provided with immediate feedback, support and encouragement.</li> <li>• Instructor attempt to ensure all group members are experiencing some success and enjoyment.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
19. Water contamination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice is sought from appropriate authorities re. safety. E.g. SA Water, Onkaparinga council.</li> <li>• If level of contamination is high/dangerous, then fishing is cancelled.</li> <li>• “Catch and release” policy re-enforced through the lesson</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>
20. Rapid deterioration in weather conditions,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructor-In-Charge to monitor weather during the day and inform instructors if sessions need to be cancelled or seriously modified.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b>

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21. Thunderstorm/lightening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructors to monitor weather forecasts for thunderstorm/lightning and remain vigilant for rapidly deteriorating weather/approaching storms.</li> <li>• If thunder becomes easily audible, students to be removed from the water and everyone to proceed to dry ground.</li> <li>• If anyone's hair stands on end or buzzing heard from nearby rocks and fences, everyone to move to a new position immediately.</li> <li>• If in the open away from shelter, everyone to crouch down, preferably in a hollow with feet together, and remove any metal objects from the head and body. Individuals should not lie down but avoid being the highest object in the vicinity.</li> <li>• Telephone use should be avoided where possible because the telephone system can become highly charged. If an emergency call is necessary, it must be brief.</li> <li>• Storms generally pass within ten minutes. If thunder is no longer easily audible, instructors will check the sky in the direction that the storm approached from noting that there could be a second front.) If sky clear students may return to their activity.</li> </ul>	Medium
22. Danger from unknown member of the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If using public/community change rooms or toilets primary age students using the toilet must be accompanied by a teacher/instructor or with a "buddy" for secondary aged students.</li> <li>• Staff to remain vigilant for people loitering, particularly around public/community change rooms/toilets, and if appropriate contact police or Centre I/C for assistance.</li> <li>• Photographs of students only taken if permission from parents obtained.</li> </ul>	Medium
23. Theft of student/staff personal items whilst stand up paddling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students encouraged to leave valuable items at home or back at the aquatics centre.</li> <li>• Items such as towels, shoes, sunglasses should be left in a central location on the beach where onshore instructors can monitor them.</li> </ul>	Medium
24. Instructor fatigue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent rotation of instructors with roles varied. E.g. 1 instructor to delivery safety briefing, 1 on fishing instruction with roles reversed for each session.</li> <li>• Instructors encouraged to develop an effective method of hand signals to communicate with students from the beach to avoid excessive use of their voice.</li> </ul>	Medium
25. Transmission of disease due to shared use of wetsuits. E.g. Skin infections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students allocated a wetsuit to use for the session/day.</li> <li>• All aquatics centres have a cleaning procedure that is rigorously followed (with supervision from instructors to ensure compliance).</li> </ul>	Medium
26 Problems arising from intoxication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure department's no alcohol and drug policy is enforced.</li> <li>• Exclude anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs.</li> </ul>	Medium

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27. Transmission of COVID-19 through use of stand up paddle-boarding equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cleaning process for rods and rigs is rigorously followed before re-use of equipment by another student</li> <li>• Social distancing between instructors and students wherever possible</li> <li>• Hand sanitiser used by instructors before and after providing assistance wherever possible</li> <li>• Strict instruction on non-sharing of equipment.</li> <li>• Instructors to ensure equipment fits prior to getting on the water.</li> <li>• After use each student to wash each piece of equipment they have used in the appropriate manner and this is to be supervised by the instructor.</li> </ul>	<b>High</b>

## Risk management – What you need to do!

**Step 1:** Have a look at [WHS safety management](#) intranet and see if there are any activity hazards that are not already covered.

**Step 2:** Identify controls for your remaining hazards. Use the hierarchy of control chart to help select controls that provide the highest level of protection to employees.



**Step 3:** Assess the level of risk for the remaining hazards with all controls in place.

WHS Risk Assessment Matrix		Consequences				
		First aid, Personal support or counselling.	Medical or dental treatment.	Hospital emergency department (Out-patient)	Admitted to Hospital (In-patient)	Death, permanent disabling injury
Likelihood	<b>Certain:</b> to occur at some stage	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	<b>Likely:</b> to occur	Low	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	<b>Possible:</b> could reasonably occur	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	<b>Unlikely:</b> to occur	Low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
	<b>Rare:</b> not expected to occur	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High

**Step 4:** Check the assessed risk level and undertake the associated action.

<b>Extreme</b>	<b>Do not undertake the activity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact the Work Health and Safety team on <a href="mailto:Education.WHS@sa.gov.au">Education.WHS@sa.gov.au</a> or on 8226 1440 for guidance on risk reduction</li> <li>Consult with workgroup Health and Safety Representative where available</li> </ul>
<b>High</b>	<b>Reduce the risk as far as reasonably practicable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Escalate to site leader and/or local safety/ management committee for review</li> <li>Consult with workgroup Health and Safety Representative and affected parties</li> <li>Review department <a href="#">WHS safety management</a> intranet for control requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>Activity may be undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider ways to further reduce the risk and review the department <a href="#">WHS safety management</a> intranet</li> <li>Consult with workgroup Health and Safety Representative or affected parties</li> </ul>
<b>Low</b>	<b>Activity may be undertaken safely</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the activity and controls to ensure the risk remains low</li> </ul>