



RISK ASSESSMENT

Cape Town Surf School (Pty) Ltd

Date: 1 March 2026

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Location: Cape Town, South Africa

Introduction

This risk assessment identifies potential hazards associated with the operation of a surf school and outlines control measures to minimize risk to students, staff, and the public.

This is a living document and should be reviewed and updated regularly.

1. Rip Currents

Risk:

Rip currents present a risk of drowning, exhaustion, and panic for both students and instructors. Beginner lessons are conducted in shallow water to reduce this risk.

Control Measures:

Teach students how to identify and respond to rip currents during safety briefings

Maintain a minimum instructor-to-student ratio of 1:5

Continuously monitor ocean conditions and student positioning

2. Large Waves and Strong Swell

Risk:

Large waves and strong swell may result in students being held underwater, collisions with boards, or injury.

Control Measures:

Conduct daily surf condition checks before lessons
Do not operate in unsafe or unsuitable conditions
Guide students to appropriate surf zones and safe entry/exit points
Teach safe techniques such as turtle rolling and board control

3. Marine Life

Risk:

Marine life such as sharks or jellyfish may pose a risk of injury or panic, although encounters are rare.

Control Measures:

Monitor local marine advisories before sessions
Inform students of potential risks during briefings
Postpone lessons if marine threats are present
Maintain a fully stocked first aid kit

4. Board and Fin Injuries

Risk:

Cuts, bruises, or impact injuries from surfboards and fins.

Control Measures:

Use soft-top surfboards for beginner lessons
Inspect all equipment before use
Teach proper board handling and safe falling techniques
Maintain safe distances between participants

5. Dehydration and Sunburn

Risk:

Dehydration, heat exhaustion, and sun damage due to exposure.

Control Measures:

Require use of wetsuits and sunscreen
Provide water breaks during sessions if needed
Instruct students to bring water
Educate on sun protection

6. Physical Exhaustion and Panic

Risk:

Fatigue may result in panic or inability to return safely to shore.

Control Measures:

Assess swimming ability and fitness before lessons
Conduct lessons in shallow, controlled environments
Maintain a maximum 5:1 ratio
Monitor for signs of fatigue and respond early

7. Emergency Response

Risk:

Delayed emergency response may worsen injuries.

Control Measures:

Ensure instructors are trained in CPR and First Aid
Keep a fully stocked first aid kit on-site
Follow a clear emergency action plan
Maintain a clear chain of command

8. Inadequate Equipment

Risk:

Faulty equipment may lead to injury.

Control Measures:

Conduct pre-session equipment checks
Match equipment to participant size and skill level
Store and maintain equipment properly

9. Submerged Obstacles

Risk:

Rocks or hidden hazards may cause injury.

Control Measures:

Inspect surf conditions and location before sessions

Inform students of known hazards

Avoid unsafe areas, especially during low tide

10. Participant Requirements & Competency

Risk:

Participants who are unable to swim or who misrepresent their ability may be at increased risk.

Control Measures:

Participants must confirm basic swimming ability

Participants must disclose any injuries or medical conditions

Instructors may refuse participation if safety is compromised

11. Incident Reporting

Risk:

Failure to document incidents may create legal exposure.

Control Measures:

All incidents must be recorded

Serious incidents must be reported where required

Records must be retained for legal and insurance purposes

12. Insurance & Liability

Cape Town Surf School (Pty) Ltd maintains appropriate public liability insurance in relation to its operations.

All activities are conducted in accordance with established safety procedures and risk management protocols.

Participation in surf lessons is undertaken at the participant's own risk.

Failure to follow instructor guidance or safety procedures may increase risk and may affect any claims.

13. Compliance with Safety Procedures

All participants are required to comply with:

Instructor instructions
Safety briefings
Equipment usage guidelines

Cape Town Surf School (Pty) Ltd reserves the right to:

Refuse participation
Remove any participant from a lesson

if safety procedures are not followed or behaviour poses a risk.

Summary

The primary risks associated with Cape Town Surf School (Pty) Ltd relate to environmental factors such as ocean conditions and human factors such as fatigue.

These risks are effectively managed through:

- **Proper planning and daily condition checks**
- **Low student-to-instructor ratios**
- **Trained instructors**
- **Strong safety procedures and supervision**