

# Compulsory Keep Watch Wristband at Council's Aquatic Facilities Policy

**Date Adopted:** 27 September 2016

**Version:** 1.1

## Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- To reduce drowning deaths, near drowning incidents and associated injury involving young children under the age of six (6) years within Council's aquatic facilities
- To identify all children under the age of six (6) years within Council's aquatic facilities with compulsory Keep Watch wristbands
- To actively promote and enforce the supervision rule to all parents and carers with compulsory wristbands for all children under the age of six (6) years.

## Policy Scope

The policy applies to children under the age of six (6) years of age, as well as their parents and carers within Council's aquatic facilities.

## Policy Statement

The Royal Life Saving Society's Keep Watch @ Public Pools is an educational and public awareness campaign to address the growing concern regarding supervision of children at public aquatic facilities. It is designed to increase the proportion of parents/carers who adequately supervise their children in public aquatic facilities. Through the implementation of the 'Keep Watch' program, this policy will:

- Provide and enforce parental supervision standards and practices at Maitland City Council Aquatic Centres
- Promote the "Within arm's reach" concept for all children under the age of six (6) years
- Increase the proportion of parents and caregivers that effectively supervise their children at Maitland City Council Aquatic Centres
- Improve awareness of and knowledge amongst parents and caregivers of appropriate supervision levels for children under six (6) years of age at Maitland City Council Aquatic Centres.

### 1. Implementation

As part of the Keep Watch @ Public Pools program, the following will be implemented within Council's aquatic facilities:

- Children under the age of six (6) years will be provided with a compulsory Keep Watch @ Public Pools Wristband which must be worn at all times. This wristband(s) will be the responsibility of the parent or carer to ensure they are applied and worn at all times within Council's Aquatic Centre's. These wristbands will be provided by Maitland City Council either at the admissions counter or within the facility.

## 2. Provision of wristbands

- General Entry Admissions: Kiosk staff responsible for providing wristband(s).
- Season Ticket Holders: MCC Lifeguards responsible for providing wristband(s).
- Maitland City Council Learn to Swim (LTS) Students: MCC LTS Instructors responsible for providing wristband(s). It is the responsibility of the parent or carer to ensure the wristband(s) are immediately applied and worn at all times.

## 3. Supervision

- Lifeguards will enforce 'Within Arm's Reach': Which means a parent or carer is in the water with the child at all times.
- Unsupervised children: Will be removed from the water by Lifeguards.
- Unsupervised children of poor swimming ability regardless of age: will be removed from the water by lifeguards if they are concerned for their safety.
- When a child is under supervision by an instructor or teacher in a structured learning environment a parent is not required to be in the water (with the exception of Parent/Carer Water Familiarisation classes)
- Appropriate supervision: There is to be a minimum ratio of 1 parent or carer to 4 children under 10 years of age.

## Policy Definitions

Keep Watch @ Public Pools Program:	This is an initiative of the Royal Life Saving Society Australia. It is an educational & public awareness campaign to improve supervision within public aquatic facilities.
MCC:	Maitland City Council.
Within Arm's Reach:	Does not literally mean an arm's length away. Within Council's pools it means a parent or carer being close enough to a child to respond and react should something happen to the child in the water.

## Policy Administration

<b>Business Group:</b>	City Services
<b>Responsible officer:</b>	Manager Community & Recreation
<b>Council reference:</b>	Ordinary Council Meeting 27 September 2016 – Item 11.1
<b>Policy review date:</b>	Three (3) years from date of adoption
<b>File number:</b>	12/58 & 12/59
<b>Relevant legislation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)</li></ul>
<b>Related documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet 2012, Practice Note 15. Water Safety</li><li>• Royal Life Saving Society Australia Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations (GPSO)</li></ul>

## Policy History

VERSION	DATE APPROVED	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES
1.0	27 September 2016	New policy adopted
1.1	-	Updated to new branding and alignment to organisation structure. No change to content.