INTERNATIONAL LIFE SAVING FEDERATION

World Water Safety

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BEACH LIFEGUARD

MINIMUM SKILL SETS AND COMPETENCIES

Training Requirement

A Beach Lifeguard (also called a Surf Lifeguard or Sea Lifeguard) is a person who will be regularly assigned to protect life and provide safety cover in the sea, ocean or open water environment. The operational environment places very specific demands on the skills and knowledge expected of a competently trained lifeguard.

The following are the minimum skill sets and competencies endorsed by the International Life Saving Federation for a Beach Lifeguard:

1. Demonstrate a level of fitness to meet the operational requirement.
2. Describe appropriate techniques for identifying potential casualties in the water.
3. Describe the basic principles of managing aquatic (surf) and beach related emergencies.
4. Demonstrate rescues with and without equipment.
5. Demonstrate appropriate casualty care for common beach related injuries or illnesses.

ILS recognizes that many of its Member Federations have standards that exceed the above minimums, based on the conditions specific to their own countries.

ILS encourages the highest possible standards in lifeguarding, and merely provides the above as minimums. ILS encourages Member Federations to exceed these minimums.

The minimum skill sets, and competencies required of the International Life Saving Federation Beach Lifeguard should be re-assessed on a regular and recurring basis, to ensure that he or she continues to possess those minimums.

1. Demonstrate a level of fitness to meet the operational requirement		
Competency/Outcome	**Rationale**	**Assessment Criteria**
i. Perform water-based fitness skills in a pool or open water environment.	Candidates need to be pre-tested in a safe environment to ensure that they are safe to continue training in more challenging environments such as a surf beach. Organisations may feel it is appropriate to establish separate criteria for commencing training and for final testing.	**Requirement** Organisations need to develop a standard that will ensure that candidates can demonstrate a level of fitness that will keep themselves safe for training and to perform to a benchmark that meets operational requirements. **Guideline** ILS has developed a policy relating to lifeguard fitness. **Minimum Standard**

			• Swim 400m within 8 minutes
ii.	Demonstrate a level of fitness combined with applied knowledge and skills in an operational (surf or beach) environment.	Testing of candidates for beach lifeguard competencies should include elements of testing in the operational environment. This element should be carried out as if for a rescue, showing urgency and speed.	**Requirement** Organisations need to develop standards that will ensure candidates can perform required skills in the operational environment. **Guideline** Demonstrate running, wading, porpoising and swimming skills in a beach/surf environment. **Minimum Standard** • Run-Swim-Run (Run 200 m, swim 200 m and run 200 m) within 8 minutes **Note:** The Examiner in charge will have the discretion to extend the time due to varying environmental conditions, at all times ensuring the safety of the candidates, provided all candidates are informed prior to the commencement of the assessment.
iii.	Demonstrate lift and carry of casualty	Lifeguards will be required to lift and carry a casualty from the water to a position of safety on the beach	**Requirement** Organisations need to develop standards that will ensure candidates can perform required skills in the operational environment. **Guideline** Demonstrate a lift and carry of casualty taking due consideration of occupational health and safety issues for both the casualty and the rescuer. **Minimum Standard** • Demonstrate a lift and carry by a lone rescuer • Demonstrate a lift and carry by multiple (i.e. 2) rescuers
iv	Demonstrate a surface dive and underwater swim	Lifeguards need to be able to submerge to look for and recover an unconscious casualty	**Requirement** Organisations need to develop standards that will ensure candidates can perform required skills in the operational environment. **Guideline** Demonstrate an ability to surface dive and swim underwater. **Minimum Standard** • Surface dive and swim underwater a distance of 10 metres. • Explain and demonstrate simulated search patterns in pool or beach setting

2.	Describe appropriate techniques for identifying potential casualties in the water		
	Competency/Outcome	**Rationale**	**Assessment Criteria**
i.	Describe the characteristics of casualties in distress.	Lifeguards need to be able to identify at risk individuals and describe visual clues to identify a casualty in distress/drowning.	**Requirement** Lifeguards need to be able to identify casualties in order to provide an appropriate response. **Guideline** Describe the characteristics of casualties in distress. **Minimum Standard** Achieve 75% in appropriate theory assessment
ii.	Describe surveillance methodology.	Lifeguards need to demonstrate an understanding of issues related to maintaining effective surveillance of assigned areas of responsibility	**Requirement** Organisations need to develop standards that will ensure candidates can perform required skills in the operational environment. **Guideline** Describe surveillance methodology. **Minimum Standard** Achieve 75% in appropriate theory assessment

3.	Describe the basic principles of managing aquatic (surf) and beach related emergencies		
	Competency/Outcome	**Rationale**	**Assessment Criteria**
i.	Identify and describe the operational environment, related risks and local resources	Lifeguards should have a preparation phase where they inform themselves of the potential resources available in an emergency.	**Requirement** Lifeguards should be aware of the resources available to them as support and how to access those resources. **Guideline** ISO-31000 and the ILS Risk Assessment Guidelines provide a methodology as to the information required to inform the preparedness of a lifeguard operation **Minimum Standard** Achieve 75% in appropriate theory assessment
ii.	Operational communications within a lifeguard team.	Lifeguards should be aware of the need to communicate relevant operational information within the lifeguard team to ensure a coordinated response and relay safety critical information during a rescue.	**Requirement** Lifeguards should be aware of the importance of communication when responding to aquatic emergencies. **Guideline** Demonstrate ILS approved hand signals **Minimum Standard** Achieve 100% in appropriate scenario or theory assessments.

3.	Describe the basic principles of managing aquatic (surf) and beach related emergencies		
	Competency/Outcome	**Rationale**	**Assessment Criteria**
iii.	Communicate safety information to the public.	Lifeguards should be aware of the need to communicate relevant safety information to the public both pre-arrival and on beach to prevent emergencies.	**Requirement** Lifeguards should be aware of the resources available to educate the public and of the importance of preventative responses. **Guideline** ISO 20712 Parts 1,2 and 3 provide safety messages appropriate to a range of environments and activities. **Minimum Standard** Achieve 75% in appropriate scenario or theory assessments.

iv.	Demonstrate principles of dynamic risk assessment and managing emergencies.	Lifeguard will be faced with a range of potential hazards and emergencies, not all of which can be covered in training. It is therefore important for the lifeguard to understand the basic principles of applying their skills and knowledge to emergent situations.	**Requirement** Lifeguards should be familiar with the principles of dynamic risk assessment and managing emergencies. **Guideline** ISO-31000 and the ILS Risk Assessment Guidelines provide a methodology that a lifeguard will be required to apply using skills and knowledge to develop and implement strategies to manage emergencies.
			• Identify hazards
			• Evaluate risk
			• Treat the risk
			  1. Identify and select strategies for water rescues and emergencies.
			  2. Identify and solve potential problems for putting plans into place.
			  3. Design a basic emergency management plan.
			  4. Practice emergency action plan.
			  5. Review and modify emergency management plan.
			
			 Minimum Standard Achieve 75% in appropriate scenario or theory assessment.

4.	Demonstrate rescues with and without equipment		
	Competency/Outcome	**Rationale**	**Assessment Criteria**
i.	Demonstrate rescues with equipment	Candidates should demonstrate competency on equipment that they would be expected to use operationally.	**Requirement** Organisations need to develop standards that will ensure candidates can perform required skills in the operational environment and utilise equipment relevant to the organisations operations. **Guideline** ILS organisations utilise a range of equipment types. Skills should be assessed in the operational environment.

			Minimum Standard • Perform rescue of conscious casualty • Perform rescue of unconscious casualty
ii.	Demonstrate rescues without equipment	While it is recommended that equipment should always be used for rescues it is recognised that lifeguards may become separated from their equipment or encounter rescue situations when equipment is not available	**Requirement** Lifeguards should be familiar with casualty assessment, approaches and support/tows. Consideration should also be given to teaching escapes and releases. **Guideline** Skills should be assessed in the operational environment. **Minimum Standard** • Demonstrate a safe approach and an escape or release • Perform rescue of conscious casualty • Perform rescue of unconscious casualty

5.	Demonstrate appropriate casualty care for common beach related injuries or illnesses		
	Competency/Outcome	**Rationale**	**Assessment Criteria**
i.	Demonstrate Basic Life Support (BLS)	Lifeguards must have the skills necessary to provide casualty care to a drowning victim.	**Requirement** Lifeguards should be able to provide BLS to the drowning victim, including recognition of an emergency, ability to call for help, competence in chest compressions and in rescue breathing. **Guideline** ILCOR or equivalent. **Minimum Standard** Demonstrate BLS
ii.	Demonstrate casualty care (first aid)	Lifeguards should demonstrate competency to manage casualties with a range of illnesses and injuries common in an aquatic (beach/surf) environment.	**Requirement** Lifeguards need to be able to identify and perform first aid techniques for managing injury and emergency including: • Casualty management • Identify and managing injuries (i.e. shock, fractures, arterial and venal bleeding, spinal injury etc.) • Use of appropriate rescue and first aid equipment. • Documenting as per organisational requirements **Guideline** In accordance with national guidelines **Minimum Standard** Achieve 75% in appropriate scenario or theory assessment.

Range of Variables

There are several variables that will affect the performance and assessment of the learning outcomes. These may include:

- **Facilities**
  Facilities and use of varying open water aquatic locations. Conditions of the venue. Identification of equipment that is available for use at that location.
- **Dress**
  Candidates should wear appropriate clothing.

Regulation approved by the ILS Board of Directors in 2013.