Welcome all to another season on the beach, as we kick off the season it is important we all take a moment to ensure we consider the dangers that lifeguarding inherently entails at our beach.

When considering your safety, our club’s underlying principle is making sure our “Lifeguards return home safely at night”.

Where you as a lifeguard think this is being compromised or have identified risks as part of your patrol or in and around our buildings then please bring these matters to your Patrol Captain’s attention or the Director of Lifeguarding at lifeguarding@waimaramasurf.org.nz

Collectively the following forms our club’s framework for Health and Safety for lifeguarding:

1. Club Patrol Operations Manual (POM) for Waimarama beach.
2. Club Health and Safety Policy
3. Club Hazard Register

Copies of all of the above are held at the Waimarama beach clubrooms (in the Tower and in the upstairs clubroom floor area). As a lifeguard you are required to understand these, particularly the POM and Hazard Register. Your Patrol Captains will be going through these at the start of the season with all their patrol members as well to ensure you are aware of these.

**What about me, what can I do to “ensure I return home safely at night?”**

As a lifeguard you also have a personal responsibility to your own safety, and safety of the public whom we provide services to at Waimarama Beach. The following provides further personal responsibilities guidelines:

1. **Fitness -** You should maintain a level of fitness that you can comfortably meet the 400m time trial in the pool. Comfortably, means below or closer to 8 minutes than the 9 minute maximum time. This recognises that swimming at Waimarama beach surf conditions requires a greater level of fitness than the 9 minute time trial would reflect.
2. **Capability -** You should have a level of confidence and capability to deal with the surf conditions at Waimarama. As you know, swimming in the pool, or pool like conditions is totally different to swimming in surf. You need to cope with the many conditions at Waimarama. Our run, swim, run refresher should allow you to demonstrate you can comfortably cope with getting through the surf and returning to shore in the set time frame. **Remember your safety comes first and foremost in any rescue situation, never enter the surf if you are not confident or you consider your own safety is at risk.**
3. **Practice -** During the patrol season you should regularly get into the water to practice your swimming skills in the surf. There are lots of opportunities to do this either during your patrol (but make sure you advise your Patrol Captain), Sunday midday swim sessions, and or joining the Senior surf sports teams. **You should never train alone**, please ensure there is always someone who is at the beach who is keeping an eye on you while you are training or practicing.
4. **Injuries -** You should never enter the water on patrol while you are carrying an injury. Please ensure you advise your Patrol Captain if you do have an injury. Carrying an injury does not mean you cannot participate in your patrol, in fact the complete opposite as you can still contribute in the Tower and so on.
5. **Quad -** You must be 16 and over and have a learners drivers license to operate a Quad. Never carry passengers on a quad bike or be a passenger on a quad. A helmet should be worn at all times.
6. **ATV –** You must have a restricted drivers license to operate an ATV (all terrain vehicle). Seatbelts should be worn at all times.
7. **Van –** You cannot operate the van unless you have a full drivers license and over the age of 18.
8. **Alcohol, Drugs and Medication –** Under no circumstances should you operate any vehicle or attend Patrols if you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the last 24 hours. Where you are taking medication and this may impair your ability to perform your duty on patrol, please advise your Patrol Captain.
9. **Health –** Please use appropriate resuscitation masks. You should always avoid direct contact with blood or any other bodily fluids. Resuscitation masks should be used along with rubber gloves. It is recommended by SLSNZ that you have a Hepatitis B inoculation, you should consult your own doctor before proceeding to do so.
10. **Sun –** SLIP, SLOP, SLAP. Wear a wide brimmed hat, long sleeve shirt and apply plenty of suntan lotion regularly during the day. Remember, water reflects the sun so is needed on the face even if you are wearing a hat.
11. **Heavy –** Do not use your back as a crane, follow good practice and bend your legs. If it is heavy or difficult to lift something, please get help, do not try to lift on your own.
12. **IRB’s –** You need to be qualified to operate an IRB or crew an IRB. To be a driver on patrol, club policy requires you to have a minimum of two year’s driver experience before being a Patrol IRB Driver.

**Please report any hazards on the lifeguard patrol whiteboard and advise your Patrol Captain.**

**Where you consider Health and Safety matters are not being addressed adequately, please contact the Chairman on** **Chair@waimaramasurf.org.nz**

**Thank you for taking the time to read this notice, our POMS and Hazard Register, if you have any questions please ask your Patrol Captain or Director of Lifeguarding.**

**Look after yourselves and each other, and have fun on patrol.**