Remote supervision by signage

Department: Organisational Development & Governance
Responsible Officer: Executive Manager

Introduction

Council recognises the need for the implementation of a program for remote signage management with the aim of reducing the risk to the public for any remote areas that are under Council control or operation.

This procedure provides a systematic method for determining signage requirements at beaches, swimming pools, tidal pools, reserves, parks and river banks. Signage is intended to perform the function of providing information to the public that would otherwise require the presence of Council staff. The signage should allow a person to make an informed decision about entering/using a particular Council controlled facility. Signs are the most economical and simplest method that Council can employ for supervision at a remote location.

The benefit of a sign is that it brings the foreseeable risk to the attention of the person at that location. It is intended to add to the knowledge of the person who views the sign. If the person then elects to enter the area and suffers injury as a result of the risk about which the warning symbol relates, Council has reduced its risk exposure through duty of care and no liability should attach to it. The sign must be appropriate to the situation and placed in an appropriate position to satisfy Council's duty of care requirements.

This procedure uses best practice guidelines from Council’s insurer and the priority of signage implementation will be based on Council’s incident rates as well as Council’s financial constraints

Council will allocate funding each year through the Budget Estimates process to meet the staged implementation of the signs.

Process

1. A regular inspection program of Council’s remote supervision signage shall be conducted by Council’s staff.
2. Generally, an inspection will be initiated through one of the following mechanisms:
   a. Scheduled inspection initiated by Council
   b. Service requests from facility users, the general public or Councillors and Council Employees
3. Areas of Public Liability exposures at swimming pools, beaches, reserves, parks and public areas under Council’s control, noted as inadequately sign posted shall be assessed with the view to using signs as remote supervision.
4. Signs in existence currently not meeting the current Best Practice Guidelines and/or Australian Standards shall be replaced as funds permit, in priority order based on public usage of the respective areas and the rating formula detailed in the procedures.
5. Council’s relevant Group/Executive Managers shall seek an annual budget allocation from Council to be used for the renewal and inspection of old signs and the installation of new signs where identified by the procedures.
6. Beach signs will not warn of the presence of sharks as the risk is a known hazard when swimming at a beach. Further, the likelihood of a shark attack on a Council beach is rare.
7. River beaches located more than 500 metres from the entrance to a river will be signed as a reserve not a beach.
8. Pools with a classification 1 and 2 under “Practice Note No 15 Water Safety Revised Sept 2010” will be signed as part of the reserve not as a pool.