



**Western Cape
Government**
Environmental Affairs and
Development Planning



NATIONAL SEA RESCUE INSTITUTE (NSRI) / GOVERNMENT PUBLIC LAUNCH SITE, WITSAND.

OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE MANAGEMENT/ OPERATION OF PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH SITES LISTED IN TERMS OF SECTION 2(2) OF THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAUNCH SITES IN THE COASTAL ZONE (REGULATIONS GN. NO. R.497. 27 JUNE 2014)



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1. Background

1.1 History and background of the NSRI Slipway

The Breede River is 322km long from its source near Ceres to where it enters the Indian Ocean in Sebastian Bay, draining a catchment of approximately 12 600 km². The Breede River Estuary comprises approximately the lower 52km of the river, i.e. from the mouth at Witsand to the extent of the tidal influence 10km upstream of Malgas, and possesses a total surface area of 455 ha. Although the estuary falls within the winter/bimodal rainfall transition zone, most of the catchment falls within the winter rainfall area. Flows are strongly seasonal with peak flows and floods during the winter months, but the estuary nevertheless enters the sea through a permanently open mouth.

The slipway is used by estuary users for various activities, including skiing, fishing and general boating, as well as commercial boats going out to sea.

The slipway is listed as a public launch site.

1.2 Site Location

Geographical Information			
Location Description		NSRI / Government Slipway	
Province	Western Cape	District Municipality	Garden Route District
Local Municipality	Hessequa Municipality	Town	Witsand
GPS Co-ordinates			
	-34.397118	20.837822	Location of PLS
Other			
	Yes	No	Comments / Remarks
Access Road	X		Hitchcock Street (Tar Road).
Ablution Facilities	X		
Access Control		X	
Slipway	Formal concrete slipway.		
General	Bins provided and serviced regularly.		

1.3 Legal Status of this Site as a PLS

The Management of Public Launch Sites in the Coastal Zone regulations, hereafter referred to as the 'regulations', were promulgated in terms of section 83(1)(d)(i) & (o) of the *National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 24 of 2008)*, as amended

The regulations were published in Government Gazette No. 37761, appearing as Government Notice No. R.497, on 27 June 2014; and it provides the legal framework for the management of public launch sites (PLS).

PLS Regulation 3(3) specifically obligates the Management Body, i.e. the Municipality (in this case Local Municipality), to manage a PLS in terms of an Operational Plan; which is considered by the MEC on matters outlined in regulation 2(2), he may wish to determine, impose or regulate on.

The NSRI / Government Slipway was listed by MEC: Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, Anton Bredell, as an official Public Launch Site and Hessequa Municipality identified as the responsible Management Body, in Provincial Gazette 7410, Provincial Notice 193/2015, on 26 June 2015.

2. Access Management

2.1 Limit on the number of boats that may be launched.

Currently no limit on the number of boats exist, however the parking is limited and the onus lies on the operator to find alternative parking should the designated parking reached its' full capacity.

The municipality reserves the right to regulate the amount of boats that utilise the slipway at any given time, in order to limit user conflict and ensure the free flow of traffic around the PLS.

A carrying capacity study to be considered by the managing authority should the need arise. Study dependent on the availability of funding.

2.2 The maximum overall length that shall apply to boats/vessels.

Launching at the site is restricted to:

9.0 meters

2.3 Access and municipal service fees applicable to the site.

No launching and municipal service fees applies. The municipality reserves the right to implement a launching and service fee in consultation with interested and affected parties. Any fees imposed to be approved by the relevant minister.

2.4 Operating Hours

All hours.

Note: **No fishing allowed during night ban hours.**

3. Code of Conduct: Slipway etiquette & guidelines

- 3.1 **No vessel allowed without a boating permit.**
- 3.2 **As a listed Public launch site, boats shall at all times have priority use of the slipway** over all other users. All other users shall move out of the way (including their belongings) without unreasonable delay or argument after being requested or signalled to do so.
- 3.3 In the interest of safety and minimising frustration to boaters and others, everyone is required to **adhere strictly to these guidelines** and to report any on-going disregard thereof to the authorised officers.
- 3.4 All users **must adhere to the Municipal By-Laws, SAMSA Regulations, the National Environmental Management Act, Marine and Living Resources Act, OVR Regulations**, as well as other applicable legislation.
- 3.5 All skippers shall strive to **minimise the time that their boats and trailers occupy the slipway** in the interest of other boaters. In this regard, skippers are encouraged to prepare a pre-launch checklist, including pre-season equipment checks, and to ensure that all crew and driver are all available to avoid delay, prior to entering the queue to launch. No-one may enter the queue if boats are waiting to return from the estuary or sea.
- 3.6 Kayaks, vessels, surf skis and other **equipment shall not be left unattended on the slipway** where these can be damaged, obstruct or hinder the full use of the slipway by boaters.
- 3.7 **No jet-skis** allowed.
- 3.8 **No equipment** to be left on the slipway.
- 3.9 All trailers and boats shall be fitted with **safety chains/ropes** and these shall be used at all times that the boat is on the trailer.
- 3.10 **No reverse practicing will be allowed.**
- 3.11 The skipper, prior to commencing his passage to estuary shall **nominate a crew member also to look out for other users on and around the slipway**, before proceeding at a safe speed.
- 3.12 The SAMSA regulations requirements are as follows: All vessels should be marked with a single traceable approved number; all skippers of motor vessels should be competent and be certificated; All vessels should be inspected annually and certified as seaworthy (certificate of fitness). All vessels should carry the appropriate safety equipment (marginally less than category E for certain types of craft such as canoes, kayaks etc.); All vessels should have inherent buoyancy. All skippers have to be accompanied by a **Skippers Licence, Certificate of Fitness and Buoyancy Certificate**, should the motor be more than 15HP.

- 3.13 **Boats returning from estuary shall have priority** access to the slipway over boats wanting to launch (except for those boats already queued up to launch) and the latter shall not obstruct access to the slipway nor hinder retrieval.
- 3.14 **No boats may be left unattended** at any time.
- 3.15 **Authorised officers** (as defined by the municipal bylaws) are requested not to perform their inspections in areas that obstruct or unreasonably delay the launching or retrieval of other boats, for safety reasons. No one may board a retrieved boat without prior advice from the skipper/driver.
- 3.16 **No-one may fish off the slipway.**
- 3.17 **No alcohol** or any other intoxicating substance shall be allowed on the premises and nobody is allowed to launch while under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicating substance.
- 3.18 **No dogs are allowed on the slipway.**

4. Parking and Control Area

4.1 Extent of control area of launch site

The extent of the controlled area includes the road reserve, the slipway area and a portion of the public open space as indicated in figure 1. Parking at this specific slipway is a challenge as the provision of dedicated parking areas are dictated by the geography of the area. Historically, enough parking was provided for, but due to an increase in recreational users the available parking does reach its capacity at times (during April and December Holidays). As such, note that no additional parking will nor can be developed, near the slipway due to the geographical area and available land.

Note: The public road and access to and from the NSRI exists should always be kept clear. Signage to be erected by municipality where parking is not allowed.



Figure 1: PLS Layout

5. Environmental Considerations

5.1 The users of this site must comply with the provisions of the general duty of care principle and the remediation stipulated in terms of section 28 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), the provisions of the National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 24 of 2008) as well as all other relevant legislation.

5.2 Prohibited activities:

- No washing of vessels, trailers or vehicles.
- No scaling and cleaning of fish.
- No disposal of bait may take place on the site.
- No re-fuelling on site.
- No littering.
- No fires allowed.
- No revving of motors allowed on slipway for the purpose of testing.
- Driving over vegetation of any kind is prohibited.
- Both vehicles and people must strictly avoid ecologically sensitive areas in the vicinity of the launch site. Where feasible, such areas should be identified by appropriate signage.

6. Management Body

The public launch site is managed by Hessequa Municipality.

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