

# SANDCRUISER BEACH WHEELCHAIR

## User Guide and Conditions of Use

This User Guide contains information about safety, handling and beach access information for the Beach Wheelchair, available free for hire and use at One Mile, Birubi and Fingal Bay Beaches.

Port Stephens Council as manager of the beaches is committed to ensuring the Beach Wheelchair is kept in good working order. Persons who use the wheelchair have a responsibility to ensure they take all reasonable steps to avoid an accident by operating it in a safe and careful manner.

People who use the Wheelchair do so at their own risk and Council cannot be held liable for any incident which occurs while it is in the charge of a third party.

It is the responsibility of the carer/user to ensure they have read and understood the following Conditions of use. This information can also be downloaded from Council's website at <https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/play/recreation-in-port-stephens/beaches-and-foreshores>.

### Safety and Handling

1. The carer (since these chairs are not self-propelled) needs to gauge for themselves the ease with which they can push their charge (the chairee) on grass surfaced areas before tackling the sand.
2. It will always be advisable for there to be two people to help with the Sandcruiser if the person in the chair weighs more than 60-70kgs, unless the pusher is at least equal to the chairee's weight and has good strength. Staff/SLSC personnel cannot be expected to provide this help on demand.
3. Extreme caution is recommended when taking the Sandcruiser Wheelchair into the water, not venturing any further than axle depth into the water.
4. The carer must first check in with the lifeguard, to see if it is safe to go near the water. In this situation, the Sandcruiser can be used on the water's edge within the flagged area of the patrol but no deeper than axle depth.
5. If the dry sand seems particularly soft to negotiate, instead of pushing (rear wheel drive), turn the Wheelchair around and pull the chair - you'll find it a lot easier in this situation.
6. The horizontal bar at the back of the Sandcruiser is used when you have 2 pushers and you are in very soft sand.
7. Use the seat belt when on the move. It is strongly encouraged to use the anti-tipping bar, which doubles as the brake, when stationary

### Care

- The Sandcruiser Beach Wheelchair is specifically designed for use on sand and soft soil. To prevent damage its use on paved footpaths, roads and other hard surfaces should be minimal.
- After use the Wheelchair must be returned to the area where it was first obtained, at least in the same condition as when it was loaned out. If any item (eg pin, buckle or protective cover) is missing or defective, this should be indicated on the sign-on sheet when signing the Wheelchair out.
- Please ensure the Wheelchair is washed thoroughly after each use to prevent damage from sand and salt, and as a courtesy to the next user. Please note that a beach shower is located at the entrance to the beach.

### Remember

- Be aware. Due to wind and tidal variations, beach suitability may vary from one day to the next.
- Please ensure you have returned the wheelchair to the life guard

### IMPORTANT SATEY WARNINGS

**It is important that all users read and understand this information prior to using the beach wheelchairs. If any of this information is unclear contact Port Stephens Council on 49880255.**

This safety warning summary sheet has been provided to ensure all users are aware of the primary safety issues for using the Sandcruiser Beach Wheelchair.

1. People with severe balance or sitting problems should consult their doctor or appropriate health professional prior to usage and may have specific considerations
2. This product must be used under supervision of an appropriate adult/carer.
3. Users should not try to use this product on their own. It is designed to be pushed by someone other than the person sitting in it.
4. This product is suitable for many surfaces including sand, some hiking paths and in snow. **It is not an all-terrain product** and should not be used on uneven terrain or on steep slopes as it can tip over on very uneven terrain.
5. This product can be difficult to push in some sandy conditions and can be difficult to push with a large person sitting in it.
6. This product has oversized wheels. Special care is needed in transferring persons into or out of the chair due to the long distance over the wheels to the beach wheelchair seat. Users should not attempt to transfer without assistance.
7. This product does not have brakes, therefore transfers should be completed on a flat surface with a person holding the chair if required.
8. The Wheelchair **should not be used in water greater then 15cm** (6 inches) as it could float and/or tip due to its oversized wheels. This product should not be used in waves or surf conditions.
9. The Wheelchair should not be used as a floatation device.
10. If the user is prone to pressure sores, back pain or other pain related conditions then medical advice should be sought prior to using this product.
11. As a safety measure safety straps should not be used if the Wheelchair is entering the water.

**Prospective users/carers must take into consideration any specific issues related to the disability, which may affect the safe use of this product.**

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE**

### Lifting and transfers

#### Important points when Transferring

Transferring a person onto the Sandcruiser Beach Wheelchair is not difficult if a lift is well planned and executed.

- When transferring a person into the beach wheelchair it is important to plan the lift carefully to avoid injury to both yourself and the person with the disability
- Many people who generally transfer independently can transfer onto the beach wheelchair with little or no assistance. They may need to transfer in two stages by propping on the large heel; it may be useful to cover the wheel with a towel.
- There are two (2) handles on the front of the chair that can be used to assist with transfers.

#### General lifting or transferring principals

- People who require assistance are able to tell you the best way of assisting them.

#### Issues to consider when lifting or transferring

- Talk to the person about their needs and abilities to assist with lift
- Assess the environment ie room to move safely, obstacles which can be moved out of the way
- Arrange area so that lift is for the shortest possible distance and does not involve twisting
- If in doubt ask a second person to assist
- If two people are involved in lift appoint a leader to call the lift.

#### Important points when lifting

- Get close to the person and hold them close to you
- Take firm hold, not too tight
- Position your feet well
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight
- Leader counts "1,2,3, lift"
- While lifting use your legs not your back
- To change direction move your feet don't twist.

It may be advisable to do a two stage lift onto the Sandcruiser Beach Wheelchair. This will involve using the wheel to rest the person while people involved in the lift adjust their feet.

Make sure the person is supported throughout the whole lift. Use a towel on the wheel when doing this type of lift.

It may be useful to ask a physiotherapist or occupational therapist to train you and others in correct principals of lifting.

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is the responsibility of the person/s of the person/s using the Beach Wheelchair to ensure that safe lifting techniques are employed.

### **1. Straps and support**

- It is easy to attach straps on the seat on the leg support bars to meet individual needs.
- Seat belt is fitted to secure the user in the chair
- Straps should not be used when a person is going into the water
- Some people may need to use cushions or towels for support and comfort.

## **2. Pushing the beach wheelchair**

- The Beach Wheelchair has been designed to push and turn easily as possible over difficult terrain. It is important to remember that it is a manual wheelchair and that the ease of pushing depends on the size of the person in the wheelchair and the slope of the environment.
- The Wheelchair has two handles either side of the seat to assist with traveling on difficult terrain. These are to be used for particularly large people or for going up steep inclines. Two people are able to assist by using these handles. These side handles can be used to lift the Wheelchair if necessary.
- The two front handles are designed to assist with transfers.

## **3. Use at water based environments**

- The Wheelchair has been designed to go into the water. The frame is made from stainless steel and the wheels are non-corrosive.
- The manufacturers recommend that the Beach Wheelchair only be used in water depth up to 15cm as the wheels are buoyant and the chair will float and may become unstable.

**CAUTION needs to be taken around environments where there is a chance of wave action as unexpected movement of the chair is a risk for users. If used in water do not strap the person into the Wheelchair.**

### **Hiring Requirements**

- Hire of the Sandcruiser Beach Wheelchair is free, however the user/carer must read the User Guidelines and sign a Loan and indemnity Agreement form before the Wheelchair can be used.
- The user/carer has the responsibility to look after the chair at all times whilst in their care.
- The Beach Wheelchair must be washed down after use ready for the next user.
- The user/carer must return the Beach Wheelchair to the lifeguard on duty after use
- Any damage or maintenance must be report to lifeguard on duty immediately.