West Coast National Park

KITEBOARDING GUIDELINES
Guidelines for kite boarding in the West Coast National Park

Kite surfing operations

Areas

- All commercial activities including the teaching of kite boarding are restricted to the “A” zone of the water area of the WCNP – area to the north of area “B” – extending from the concrete beacon marked LB 2; thence northwards along the high-water mark to the concrete beacon marked LB 3 situated at “Oesterwal”; thence westwards in a straight line to the concrete beacon marked LB 4, situated at the “Preekstoel” to the south of “Kraalbaai”; thence along the high-water mark southwards to the concrete beacon marked LB 2.

- Further to this in the above areas all kite boarding may only take place as indicated by a sign on the spot (see attached diagrams). Special attention must be paid to the areas of Klein Oesterwal/Shark Bay and Langebaan Beach (in front of Driftwoods Restaurant) and Noord Straat Baai, in this respect. *The area to the immediate south of Shark Bay where the bird hide is situated must be avoided. A beacon and screen will mark this point on the sand flats.*

- An area of 50m around the perimeter of Schaapen Island must be avoided where possible by all sailing activities to prevent disturbance to the breeding colonies of birds here.

- An area opposite Breë Street, marked by a red buoy line has been set aside for bathing and no craft or sailing device is permitted to operate, anchor or moor within it.

- The area immediately to the north of this is a designated entry and exit area for kite boarders and may not be used for teaching purposes. All teaching must commence to the north of this area.

- The water area adjacent to the beach in front of Breë Street/ Pearly’s/ Driftwoods should be used with caution for waterborne training as this area experiences strong currents. This area may however be used for beach lessons and water lessons provided that schools have adequate recovery and rescue capability. A rescue boat/vessel is recommended.
For Foil Boarding/Foiling, the area on Main Beach, north of the second small sand spit, and marked with an appropriate sign board should be used for the instruction for this discipline of the sport.

Instructors and students should exercise caution at Main Beach in the late afternoon, on an outgoing tide, to avoid becoming stranded or stricken in deeper waters in an area north of Langebaan. Rescue operations may be problematic in such situations.

Guidelines regarding additional zoned areas for activities that may require it in the future must also be observed.

**Instruction**

- All instructors offering kite surfing training to any cadet, learner or trainee need to be in possession of an accredited training certificate which is sanctioned by a recognised teaching body – PASA, IKO, VDWS and BKSA.
- Both instructors and students should exercise general courtesy towards other kite boarders and beach users at all times.
- No private teaching or teaching without a special use permit, is permitted on any of the beaches in the West Coast National Park and Langebaan. This includes Shark Bay.
- The number of students per instructor should not exceed four and the number of inflatable kites may not exceed one.
- Instructors may use two inflatable kites with short lines (5 meters) while teaching on the beach. In terms of this, the aforementioned guideline for water based teaching remains the same – one inflatable kite used by an instructor while teaching in the water.
- It is important that instructors (when teaching) ‘operate/fly’ the kite over the water area/seaward of the beach when teaching on Main Beach. Kites should never be flown over other beach-users heads i.e. a landward position. If conditions require that the kite must be flown landward, the instructor or student should at least be waist deep in the water for safety reasons.
- At Main Beach, when body dragging is being taught, instructors and students are to follow a clock wise path from the point of departure, travelling downwind towards the north and then back on foot to the entry point in the south. At certain times this will result in a ‘queue’ – please wait your turn under such circumstances. When walking back to the ‘starting point’ it is preferable that students and instructors land the kite and carry it back (as opposed to flying the kite while walking).

- In Shark Bay teaching should take place in deep enough water (recommended waist deep), and be well clear of the beach users and other water users.

- All kite schools will require a special use permit to operate training facilities in the national park. This permit as well as the accredited certification of the operator must be available on request by any employee of the National Park.

- All kite schools (instructors & students) will be expected to identify themselves in the areas/sites they are working by wearing an appropriate T-shirt/rash vest. All kite schools may also be issued with a permit card and should have this available for inspection by any authorized employee of SANParks.

- The following protective gear/equipment should be provided to, and worn by trainees: buoyancy aid, wetsuit and helmet as approved by SANParks.

- Instructors require an approved First Aid Kit which must be available on the beach during instruction periods. Also present on the beach should be a list of emergency numbers and a suitable communication device, to be used in the case of an emergency.

- All schools should have the required public liability insurance.

- All instructors should be in a sober frame of mind when teaching students.

- No structures of any nature may be erected on the beach without special permission from SANParks.

- No advertising boards, flags etc. may be used on the beaches where instruction is given.
**Reporting**

- A progress report will be required to be sent to WCNP management by the 7th of each month with respect to the kite school’s activities. The format of this report will be provided to the operator by management of WCNP.

**Correction and enforcement**

The permit issued to kite schools and related guidelines provide the park management with an effective management tool. A variety of enforcement options are available:

- Park rangers can issue a warning to a particular operator.
- A permit can be revoked if the offence continues.
- No subsequent permit may be issued for related or similar activities.
- In agreement with SANParks, schools may initiate compliance actions.

**Education and information**

- The various kite schools will ensure that park staff are adequately informed of the nature of their activities.
- The kite schools will endeavour to inform other similar operators of the requirements to operate in national parks throughout South Africa.
- The kite schools should, where possible, report any contraventions of the permit conditions to park management.

**Relationship between, and responsibilities of, the Park and the kite school/commercial operator**

- The park will consult with kite school when formulating new rules and regulations that affect commercial activities in the Park.
- Correction and enforcement of the guidelines is the responsibility of SANParks.
- One representative from the kite school should be assigned to liaise with a section ranger. This should preferably be the owner or manager of the school and this person’s name will also appear on the permit.
• Meetings between kite schools will be held with park management every six months (or as required) to discuss any issues relating to the specific activity.
• The kite school will be consulted before the imposition of any new restrictions affecting them, or any action taken against an operator due to a violation of the code of conduct/guidelines.
• The kite school is responsible for ensuring compliance to the code of conduct/guidelines, both for his staff and clients.
• Park staff will record any warnings for transgressions of these guidelines.
• The park will provide all kite schools with a database of schools holding permits in the West Coast National Park.

Kites or vessels used as support/safety craft

• The commercial operator/kite school may provide a assist/rescue craft to be used in case of emergency during kite boarding training/teaching operations.
• It is also acceptable that the instructor uses a kite to rescue a stricken individual.
• Any vessel used for commercial operations must be licensed by the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) for such operations.
• No moorings may be put down in the Park, other than those at the Langebaan Yacht Club as per the lease agreement with the park.
• The use of the water area does not allow (unless in an emergency) for anyone to alight from their vessel onto private property or onto restricted areas in the Park.

Validity of permits and related costs

• The permit in respect of a commercial activity expires on 30 September of each year and remains valid for a maximum period of 12 months or for a shorter period as may be determined by the Park.
• The holder of the permit must be able to produce this for inspection by any authorized employee of the Park, if requested to do so.
- The Park may withdraw a permit if the permit holder is found guilty of an offence in regard to handling or control of a vessel or sailing device in terms of these guidelines/code of conduct, or any violation of park regulations as set out in the NPA

**Launching sites for boats (if applicable)**
The only official launching sites for boats are at the Langebaan Yacht Club and at the designated area opposite Alabama Street.

Park Management

**West Coast National Park**