

# BEACH WHEELCHAIR SAFETY GUIDE & USER MANUAL

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## **Contact Information:**

### **City of Albany**

(08) 6820 3000

[commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au](mailto:commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au)

### **Southcoast Security Service**

0417 964 102

# Overview

The Beach Wheelchair Safety Guide and User Manual contains important information about the Hippocampe All-Terrain Beach Wheelchair. The beach wheelchair is available for free loan on a 24/7 basis at Middleton Beach, Albany.

The Hippocampe All-Terrain Wheelchair is designed to be used on sand, rough terrain and in the water.

**The Hippocampe Beach Wheelchair is designed to be used with the assistance of a support person(s). Do not attempt to use the wheelchair without assistance.**

**A transfer mat is available to assist with transfers to and from the beach wheelchair. A transfer hoist is not currently available.**

**The maximum user weight for the Hippocampe Beach Wheelchair is 130kg and should not be exceeded.**

**The recommended maximum user height is 185cm (6ft).**

# Features

- Interchangeable neutral buoyancy and floating wheels
- Adjustable headrest
- Adjustable armrests
- Adjustable harness
- Wheelchair weight: 20kg



# Location



# Operator Information

It is the responsibility of the wheelchair user and support person(s) to ensure they use the wheelchair in a safe manner and take appropriate steps to avoid an accident when operating the wheelchair. Those who use the wheelchair do so at their own risk; the City of Albany cannot be held liable for any incident which may occur while the wheelchair is being operated by a third party.

It is the responsibility of the user and/or support person(s) to ensure they have read and understood the Beach Wheelchair Safety Guide and User Manual before use.

Please contact the City of Albany if you have any concerns about the safety of the wheelchair on (08) 6820 3000 or [commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au](mailto:commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au).

It is the responsibility of support persons to use the transfer mat in a safe manner. The City of Albany cannot provide detailed advice on transferring beach wheelchair users.

# Safety Guide

- Take care using the beach wheelchair on uneven surfaces.
- Do not use the wheelchair as a floatation device.
- Wheelchair brakes are designed to assist with transfers only. Do not rely on the brakes to stop the wheelchair rolling down a steep path.
- It is the responsibility of those using the wheelchair to cease use of the device if it appears faulty and/or may impact safe use of the wheelchair.
- Ensure the user is seated as far back in the seat as possible when using the wheelchair. Ensure the users back is against the backrest.
- The wheelchair should only be used if there are adequate support persons to assist with transferring the user to and from the beach wheelchair.
- The wheelchair transfer mat should only be used if there are adequate support persons to perform the transfer safely.

## Prior to Use

- Check the weather conditions. Ensure you are aware of wave patterns, rips, currents and wind strength.
- Due to the 24/7 availability of the wheelchair, water safety provided by Surf Life Saving volunteers may not be available at the time of your booking. It is therefore the responsibility of the user and support person(s) to ensure they take reasonable safety precautions to avoid injury when using the wheelchair on land and in the water.
- Ensure you have adequate support to assist with the wheelchair. It is not the responsibility of the security guard to assist members of the public with using the wheelchair.
- The Hippocampe Beach Wheelchair is designed to provide a high level of comfort and support to the user. However, please seek advice from a health professional before use if you are unsure the wheelchair meets your requirements.
- Check the wheels are correctly locked into place before use (see page 7).
- Read the 'How to Use the Beach Wheelchair' guide before use (page 6).

## After use

- Ensure you meet the security guard back at the shed at your agreed time.
- Use the brush provided to remove sand on the wheelchair.
- Ensure all items are returned to the shed as you found them.
- Please report any maintenance issues and/or damage to the City of Albany by emailing [commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au](mailto:commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au) or calling (08) 6820 3000.

# How to Use the Beach Wheelchair

## Wheel Options

Balloon Wheels (white wheels):

- Easy to wheel across soft sand.
- Balloon wheels are stable in water levels up to the centre of the tyres. The wheelchair may float when submerged in water depths beyond the centre of the tyres.

Neutral Buoyancy Wheels (black wheels):

- Wheelchair does not float when submerged in the water.
- Wheelchair can be used with the assistance of a support person(s).
- Neutral buoyancy wheels will provide greater stability in the water when compared with balloon wheels. Wheelchair will remain stable in the water up to seat height.



Neutral Buoyancy Wheel



Floating Balloon Wheel

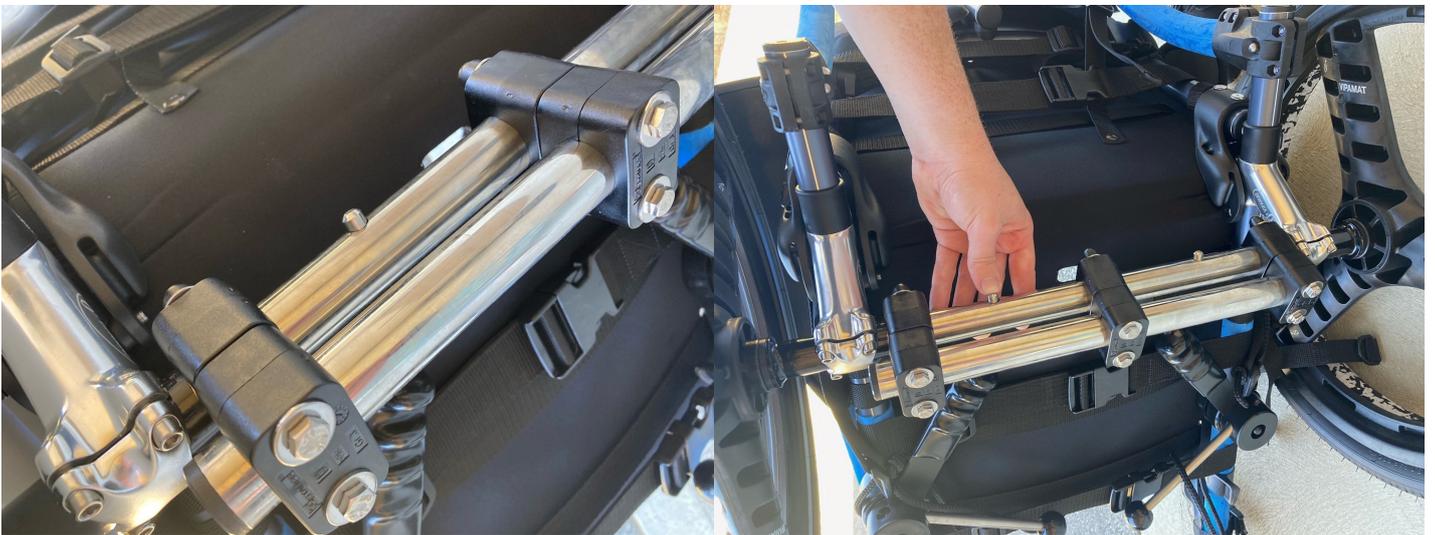
# How to Attach the Wheels

If you need to change the wheels, start by removing the wheels currently attached to the wheelchair.



Wheel attachment bar

**Step 1.** Carefully lay the wheelchair on it's side.



**Step 2.** Press the small silver button located underneath the seat to release the wheel from the attachment bar. Carefully pull the wheel out. Turn the wheelchair over and repeat steps to remove the other wheel. Place the wheels inside the shed.



**Step 3.** To attach the new wheels, ensure the wheelchair is lying on its side.

**Wheel attachment bar**



**Attachment hole**

**Step 4.** Line up the silver button on the wheel with the hole on the wheel attachment bar. Hold the button down to slide the wheel into the attachment bar. Push the bar in as far as it can go.

**Silver button**



**Ensure the button has clicked into place**

**Tip:** If you can't get the button to click in place, slowly twist the bar attached to the wheel to align the button with the hole.

**Tip:** When attaching the balloon wheels, hold the inner part of the wheel (see image below) and place the wheel under your arm.



## How to adjust the headrest

**Step 1.** Use the black screws to adjust the position of the head rest.



Adjusts headrest angle

Moves headrest forward and back

Adjusts headrest height

**Step 2.** Ensure you tighten the screws once the headrest has been adjusted.

# How to Adjust the Armrests



**Step 1.** Unclip the armrest buckle.



**Step 2.** Lift the armrest up. Lifting the armrest may improve accessibility when transferring the user to the beach wheelchair.



**Step 3.** To completely remove the armrest, unscrew the top bolt of the armrest. Remove the screw and fastening bolt. Place loose items in the storage box provided inside the shed.

**Armrest screw**



**Fastening bolt**

# How to Use the Brakes



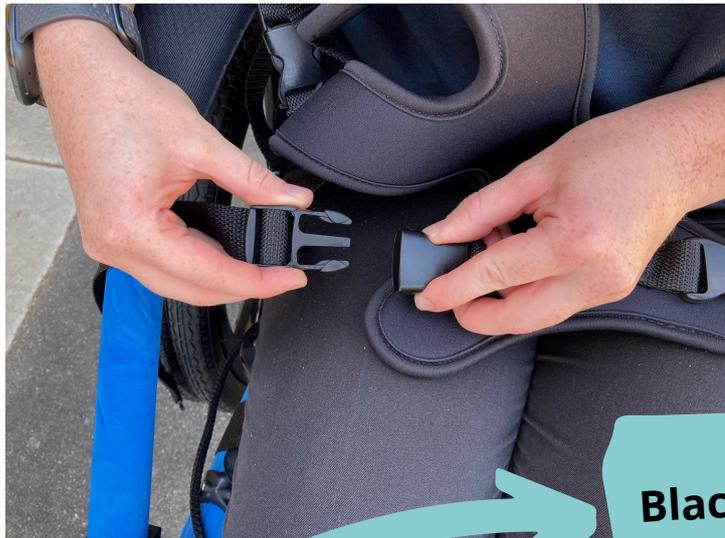
**Please note** brakes are designed to assist with transfers only. Brakes will not prevent the wheelchair from rolling down a steep hill.

**Step 1:** Use the brake handle to pull the brake out from underneath the seat.

**Step 2.** Once the brake is in-line with the wheel, pull the handle **down and up** to lock into place.

**Step 3:** To release the brakes, **pull the brake handle down to release the lock.** Once the lock is released, it should be easy to push the brake handle underneath the wheelchair, to return the brake to the original position.

# How to Adjust the Harness



**Step 1.** Before the user is transferred to the beach wheelchair, unclip one buckle connecting the harness to the wheelchair seat.

**Black clip to adjust harness**

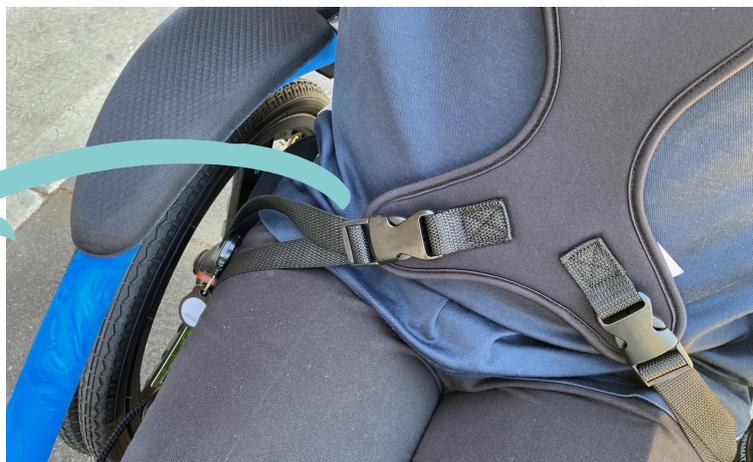


**Step 2.** Lift the black clip attached to the push bar to remove straps.

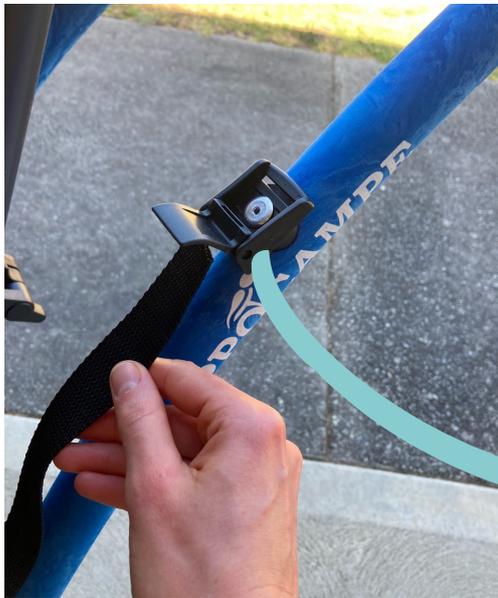


**Lift clip**

**Step 3.** Once the user is transferred to the beach wheelchair, clip the lower part of the harness together. Pull the straps to adjust the tightness of the harness.



**Harness straps**



**Step 4.** To attach the top half of the harness, open the clip and feed the strap through the clip. Pull strap until harness is secure. Push clip down to lock the strap in place.

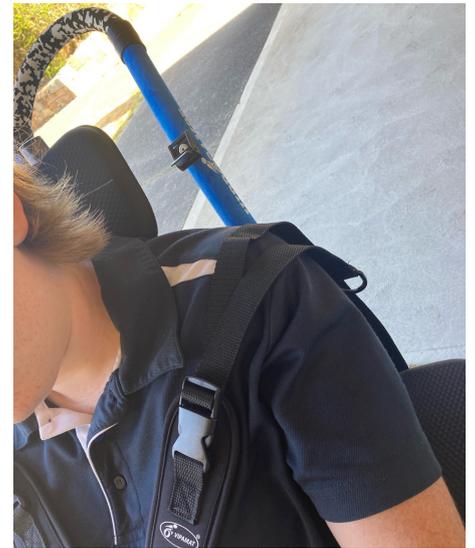
**Open clip**



**Feed through strap**



**Lock clip**



## Maneuvering the Wheelchair



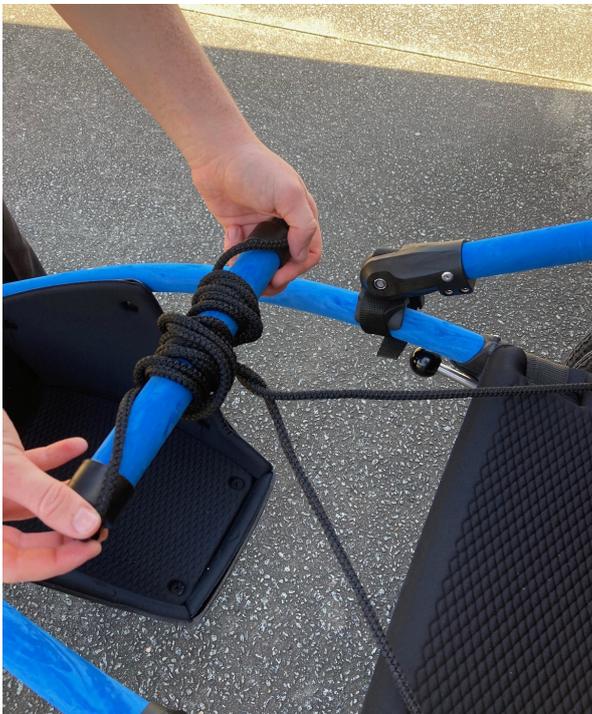
**Step 1.** Lift the front wheel off the ground to turn left or right.

**Tip:** When maneuvering the wheelchair across soft sand, turn the wheelchair around and pull the wheelchair with the back wheels leading.

# Using the Pull Rope



**Step 1.** Use the pull rope located underneath the wheelchair seat to pull the wheelchair in and out of the water.



**Step 2.** To store the pull rope, roll the cord around the blue handle.



**Step 3.** Place the rope underneath the seat, in the gap between the seat and black straps.

## Entering the Water

- Users must be accompanied in the water at all times.
- If the user chooses to exit the wheelchair to bathe in the water, a life jacket MUST be worn.
- When using the balloon wheels: to maintain stability, do not enter water depths beyond the middle of the wheel.
- When using the neutral buoyancy wheels: to maintain stability, do not enter water depths beyond the height of the seat.

## Transferring to the Beach Wheelchair

**A transfer mat is available in the shed to assist with transfers.**

It is the responsibility of the user and/or support person(s) to ensure they do not put themselves at risk during the transfer. Please ensure you have organised enough support persons to assist with the transfer process.

When transferring the user to the beach wheelchair:

- Ensure wheels are attached correctly before transferring.
- Use the breaks provided to reduce movement of the wheelchair.
- Move the armrests if required.

Please note a transfer hoist is not currently available at the site.