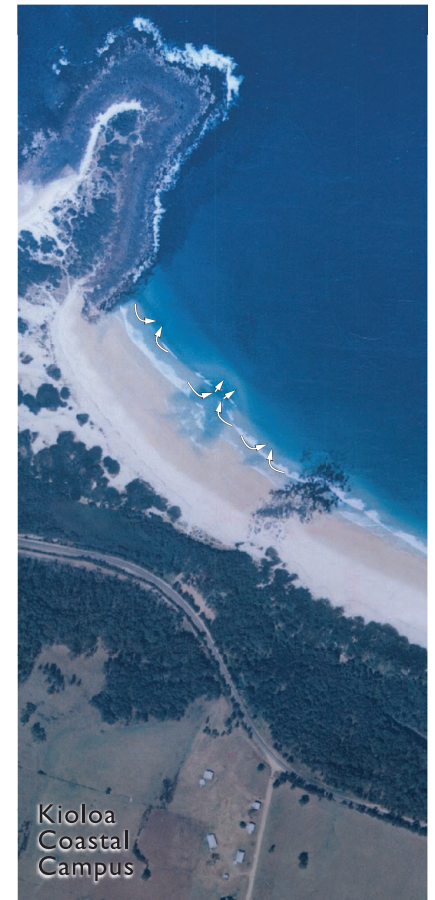


WATER SAFETY AT KIOLOA

BEWARE! The Beach at Kioloa is *NOT* Patrolled by Lifeguards

All beaches in South-Eastern Australia are extremely hazardous. Because of the steep, short continental shelf almost 96% of offshore wave power reaches the shoreline. This contrasts with, say, the Atlantic coast of the US where only 8% of deep ocean wave power reaches the shoreline.

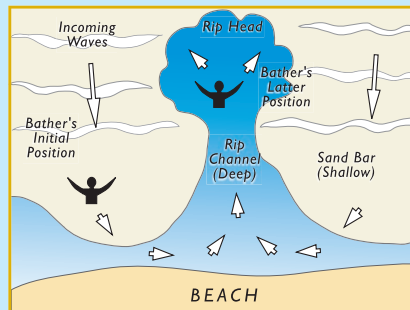
The waves that you see breaking are NOT the only waves that drive inshore currents and rips. Large, low, long-period waves can generate very strong currents which can take swimmers used to other coasts by surprise.



- If you are not an experienced and strong swimmer be very cautious.
- Never swim alone.
- Don't swim under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Don't swim directly after a meal.
- Never run and dive in the water, even if you have checked the depth before. Water conditions can change.
- Float with a current or undertow, stay calm, don't swim against it. Signal help
- If you get into trouble, DON'T PANIC.
- If you swim wisely you won't get caught in a rip. If you do get caught – try swimming across the current, not against it. If it is too strong for you – keep afloat and raise one hand for help.
- The most important thing to remember is that a rip weakens – so don't panic.

RIPS

Rip currents are the major cause of swimmer difficulties necessitating surf rescues. A rip current is formed by water seeking its own level, usually as a result of large sets of waves approaching the beach and building up water which later returns to sea to even out water levels, thus causing a drag outwards. The larger the surf, the more intense the rip.



COMMON SIGNS OF A RIP ARE:

- Discoloured brown water, due to sand which has been stirred off the bottom.
- Foam on the surface extending beyond the break
- Waves breaking further out on both sides of the rip
- Debris floating seaward
- A rippled appearance, where the surrounding water is generally calm

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CAUGHT IN A RIP

- Don't Panic! A swimmer with limited ability should ride the rip out from the beach.
- Swim parallel to the shore for 30 - 40 metres. Return to the shore where the waves are breaking, parallel to the rip.
- Stronger swimmers may swim shorewards at 45° to the rip to escape it – but this is tiring.

KNOW THE WAVES & SURF

SURGING - waves may never break. They are usually are found where the beach is very steep or in the edge of rocky shores. They can knock you over and drag you into deep water.

SPILLING - waves usually have less force and are safest for body surfing. They are usually found in sheltered bays where the sea floor slopes gradually, and near sandbanks at high tide.

PLUNGING - or dumping waves break suddenly and can throw you to the bottom with great force, and they can create strong drift currents. They usually occur at low tide and where sandbanks are shallow. You can be knocked unconscious or very badly injured in these waves.