



Royal Life Saving ACT Annual Report 2022

A water loving nation
free from drowning



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

ABOUT ROYAL LIFE SAVING

Today more than ever, Royal Life Saving is focussed on the future, with the shape of services poised to develop and evolve in line with our changing communities, shifting environmental needs and our diversifying population.

We are tremendously proud of our 107-year legacy of providing programs and services to meet the needs of our expanding community to enable safe and enjoyable aquatic pursuits. Our scope of commitments have broadly changed to enable thriving, sustainable and innovative solutions for the people of Tasmania.

To better serve our communities we are working alongside our vast network partners to explore best practice principles and strategies that enable increased safe participation across our aquatic environments.

In our role as a peak body and custodians of water safety agenda we are building on our structure and reputation to improve healthy and engaging aquatic options for today and tomorrow. New initiatives and investments with our collaborative partners are critical to enable us to meet our organisational objectives. Through our shared vision we are making progress against key drowning prevention benchmarks and implementing more expansive engagements across all our waterways.

We still have a significant journey ahead of us, but we are pleased with our progress and remain committed to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of our people, partners and community.

> OUR PAST – SINCE 1894

The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) was founded in England in 1891 to combat a high drowning toll. The techniques advocated by the Society were soon adopted by many countries and today the RLSS represents the largest single organisation dedicated to the teaching of lifesaving and the prevention of drowning.

The first Australian Branch was formed in New South Wales in 1894 and the movement soon spread to all States. In December 1924, a dual system of lifesaving was established with Surf Life Saving Australia being responsible for ocean beaches and the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia responsible for all other waterways and still water environments. The Tasmanian Branch was opened in 1915.

> OUR VISION

**A water-loving nation
free from drowning.**

 DrowningPrevention.com.au

CONTENTS

01/ ACHIEVING TOGETHER

- 06 Message from the Minister
- 07 Message from the President
- 08 Message from the Chief Executive Officer
- 10 Royal Life Saving ACT
- 11 Highlights 2021-22

02/ OUR STRATEGY

- 13 Continuing with our Vision
- 14 ACT - Fatal Drowning Report
- 16 Summer in Profile
- 20 Strategic Challenges
- 21 Strategic Commitments

03/ MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

- 24 Resourceful and Vibrant Organisation
- 32 Growth Through Leadership and Partnerships
- 40 Innovative Solutions
- 48 People – Stability and Sustainable
- 54 Value Creation

04/ OUR THANKS

- 56 Honours
- 57 Vale – Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
- 58 Supporters

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Royal Life Saving ACT acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands where its office is located, on Ngunnawal Country, and pays its respect to all Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect First Nation People's connection to land, waterways and community and make a commitment to reconciliation.



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Our aquatic environments play a crucial role in the community, promoting social interaction and general wellbeing. The last 12 months have significantly impacted the lives of many and continues to serve unprecedented challenges for the sport, recreation and aquatic sector into the future.

Despite challenging conditions, Royal Life Saving engaged our communities with innovative education solutions, vital advocacy initiatives, sector training developments and important risk mitigation programs. There was a continued prioritisation of disadvantaged communities and those who are highly susceptible to fatal and non-fatal drowning particularly our Aboriginal community and those from diverse backgrounds.

On behalf of the ACT Government, I would like to acknowledge the accomplishments and performance of Royal Life Saving over the last 12 months. Despite the challenges in excess of 2,000 individuals received vocational qualifications which included swim teachers and pool lifeguards. These individuals are the backbone to the provision of key learn to swim and active participation programs.

Each year too many Australians lose their lives or suffer injuries as a result of a fatal or non-fatal drowning incident. The impact on families and communities is significant and highlights the importance of Royal Life Saving's efforts to address risk taking behaviours and attitudes and increase water safety skills and knowledge across the ACT.

The ACT Government proudly continues to support the activities of Royal Life Saving and recognises their important role in increasing safe aquatic participation and implementing measures that build resilience and healthy communities. Royal Life Saving and ACT Sport and Recreation continue to prioritise key participation and risk agenda to ensure solutions are purposeful and appropriate for our changing lifestyles and aquatic engagements.

Finally, I congratulate and acknowledge the work and dedication of Royal Life Saving and its people including their educators and facilitators who continue to overcome unparalleled adversity to service the water safety needs of the ACT.

The Hon. Yvette Berry, MP
Minister for Sport and Recreation

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Annual Report for the Royal Life Saving Society Australia (ACT Branch) for 2021-2022.

Despite challenging operating conditions from prolonged COVID-19 disruptions, we have achieved some significant outcomes across the 12 months. We have continued to maintain a clear focus on our organisational objectives and to provide high quality and purposeful solutions.

With the pandemic dominating the initial phases of FY22 the aquatic industry has been left with a range of complex issues that continue to impact participation and service delivery. It is estimated that more than 10 million lessons were lost over the last 2 years which have generational implications. Now, with sector shortages and cost-of-living pressures, the return of Australians into learn to swim is slower than is necessary to facilitate a sufficient "catch-up" to ensure our vulnerable have the necessary skills to safely participate in the water. Our latest research suggests that 25% of families are citing the cost of lessons as a barrier to participation which elevates our concerns into the future.

Moving forward, we have a strong commitment to strengthening our partnerships to leverage increased opportunities for communities in the ACT. Our strategy is centred on building the resilience and proficiencies of our aquatic user groups while considering the challenges and barriers faced by many. Our future priorities include:

- Increasing sector capacity to deliver high quality, relevant programs and services
- Increase opportunities for active participation particularly amongst our vulnerable and disadvantaged groups
- Strengthen our risk mitigation strategies via utilisation of innovative technology; and
- Delivering campaigns that seek to reduce risk and modify behaviours.

Royal Life Saving continues to create value with the communities where we operate and for our industry partners. We have continued to build partnerships and networks to increase our influence and we are committed to continuous improvement, and we strive to operate more reliably and productively to ensure true value and opportunities.

We believe our focus on social value will lead to us being the partner of choice with communities, suppliers and customers. We seek respectful, mutually beneficial relationships with the communities where we operate and interact with.

The combination of our people, strategy and operational systems positions us well into the future. Organisational efficiencies, partnership developments and commitment to quality have ensured we are respected and highly regarded. We will need to ensure we remain relevant and adjust to meet the everchanging needs of communities. There is no doubt our lifestyles and priorities have changed as a result of the pandemic and past environmental disasters.

Our people are critically important to achieving quality outcomes. Despite ongoing adversity, they have engaged our communities with determination and passion to ensure the highest of standards. I would like to thank Cherry Bailey and the ACT staff for their dedication, and we look forward to a positive and success year ahead.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank our sector partners who continue to provide critically important swimming, water safety and lifesaving programs. Collaboration is vitally important and on this note I would like to sincerely thank the ACT Government, particularly Ms Rebecca Kelley, Executive Branch Manager at ACT Sport and Recreation Services and her team for their continued support of our programs and services. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the ongoing contribution of our ACT Directors for their dedication to the ideals and values of Royal Life Saving.

Jim Whiteside
President

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The last 12 months have been some of the most complex and difficult to navigate for Royal Life Saving ACT. Our communities have experienced isolation from many of the aquatic activities they have been accustomed to. The pandemic has also impacted the aquatic industry where traditional services and programs were not available which in turn has led to the loss of key employment roles.

Despite these challenges we responded the only way we know how – with resilience and commitment to deliver our purpose, to lead efforts to reduce drowning and increase swimming, water safety and lifesaving skills. Our people have played a central role in ensuring these challenges have not impacted our ability to service our communities across the ACT. When able, they have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to deliver quality programs and services and ensuring adaptable, skilled and knowledgeable communities.

We've also become more agile and innovative in response to the dynamic environment stemming from the pandemic, including greater use of technology. Enhancements in our digital capabilities and continued deployment of technology-based solutions have assisted greatly with productivity challenges, helping us to keep our communities supported. Our online training and education programs have been greatly utilised.

We have stepped up our community and stakeholder engagement activities and we have expanded our interface with key demographics including culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Our diverse communities continue to dominate our national annual fatal drowning toll requiring the need to develop and implement water safety agenda that addresses local need and understanding. The next 12 months will see an increased range of support services to further support priority communities.

Despite the complexities of the last couple of years our teams have been innovative and creative in exploring new ways in which to deliver key services. We appreciate that the future requires an increased commitment and greater engagement with our customers and stakeholders to ensure heightened and purposeful outcomes. A comprehensive range of social media campaigns has been scheduled leading into summer to ensure all our communities are informed and educated on key water safety and lifesaving agenda.

The ACT Drowning Report showed a promising reduction in fatal drownings. It is important that we do not become complacent or reduce our efforts to develop community resilience and skill. Our children remain highly vulnerable and the reduced level of learn to swim programs in the last number of years is reason for concern. We will engage with our aquatic partners to ensure swimming and water safety remains a highly prioritised activity across the next 12 months. Knowing how to swim and survive in the water is critical particularly with the range of aquatic environments our communities have access to.

As mentioned, our aquatic sector has also endured through complexities associated with the pandemic and various environmental disasters. Staff shortages, closures and reduced community confidence have led to financial stress and reduced levels of service. This further elevates our concerns re our children and other vulnerable groups accessing vital swimming and water safety programs.

Throughout 2021-22, Royal Life Saving continued to receive support from the ACT Government for many of our drowning prevention priorities. Our commitments focussed on increasing active participation with a particular focus on children and disadvantaged communities.

We greatly appreciate the support we receive from Sport and Recreation ACT and look forward to continuing our collaborative investment in the people of the ACT.

To all our facilitators and sector partners, thank you for your ongoing commitment and support. To our staff, our greatest asset, your continued dedication is inspirational. Our reach is truly amazing and the water safety platform we establish across the territory brings about safe and enjoyable aquatic experiences for all. I would also like to thank Cherry Bailey and her team for the passion and commitment. It is greatly appreciated and recognised.

Finally, to the Board of Directors and particularly the President, Jim Whiteside, thank you for your continued support and guidance.

Michael Ilinsky
Chief Executive Officer



> OUR VALUES

Advance with integrity – be honest, reliable and genuine.

Advance with innovation – be resourceful, relevant and inspirational.

Advance with humanitarian endeavour – be inclusive, compassionate and resilient.

> OUR PEOPLE

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Royal Life Saving has continued to support all staff and ensure their health and safety is paramount. Flexible schedules and work conditions enable our staff to address and balance work and lifestyle issues and concerns.

Our leaders are in regular contact with staff to ensure ongoing and quickly changing conditions are monitored and responded to appropriately. By understanding our staff and their needs we are confident that we'll return to post COVID-19 restrictions with confidence, enhanced work performance and productivity, improvements to individual wellbeing and attracting and keeping great talent.

> OUR FOCUS

COVID-19 has continued to disrupt the lives and livelihoods of our customers and members. It has challenged us in our work as key water safety advocates and leaders, as well as opened opportunities to adapt and develop.

Performing to high industry standards, ensuring consistency in operations and ensuring the safety of all involved have been front of mind in every decision we've taken. Based on the recent past and an understanding that the pandemic is a long-term strategic consideration, Royal Life Saving has continued to invest in enhancing how we work, as well as improving our resilience. These investments in adapting and evolving have allowed us to pivot our workforce operations quickly and meet our key objectives.

> OUR CULTURE

Royal Life Saving is a traditional organisation with a modern set of values and intent. Our culture is underpinned by a set of principles that are established and inherent in our daily commitments. Royal Life Saving is a result orientated organisation.

Our vision, "to lead efforts to reduce drowning and increase swimming, water safety and lifesaving skills", implies the critical necessity to perform and achieve our strategic goals - anything but would not be acceptable.

We seek to inspire our people and to be united by a drive for capability and success. This in turn requires our leaders to establish clear and achievable goals. While we prioritise a particular culture style, that of results, we adhere and emphasise flexibility, adaptability and receptiveness to change. We prioritise innovation, openness, diversity and long-term orientation.

Royal Life Saving has continued to demonstrate leadership across key water safety developments, implementing innovative solutions including new technologies and services to meet emerging issues.

> NGADYUNG SWIM & SURVIVE

The "Ngadyung" Swim and Survive program continued thanks to the support of the Australian Government.

Ngadyung was facilitated in both Northside and Southside locations with 331 enrolments for the year.

Three participants graduated the program having met all requirements for the much sought after 'Ngadyung Lifesaver' award status. This benchmark matches the requirements within the National Swimming and WaterSafety Framework for primary aged students.



> SWIM 4 LIFE

Royal Life Saving ACT's Swim 4 Life program was facilitated in January and April of 2022 falling just short of the participation target of 230 children. The program ran at two locations, Southside, and Northside, welcoming 195 total enrolments over the 2021/2022 project calendar year.

This program is attended by participants who are nominated by local community organisations and who are deemed to be 'at risk of missing out' on quality water safety education opportunities due to circumstances including financial hardship, cultural diversity, barriers related to trauma/fear, living out of home arrangements, and others.

The program consists of eight pool-based lessons that focus on water familiarisation and personal aquatic skills, plus two outdoor lessons hosted at a local inland waterway where participants explore and learn about the risks, dangers, and model behaviours specific to the environment.

> JUNIOR LIFESAVER

We have turned up the heat for Summer and are proud to bring you our new swimming and lifesaving participation program. An exciting new program for children aged 6 to 14 years old, with a swim & survival test prior to starting the program. Combining skills of swimming, rescue, accident prevention and emergency care, Junior Lifesavers will equip your child with the ability & knowledge to safely have a lifetime of fun in and around the water. Junior Lifesavers is a key part of Royal Life Saving's swimming and water safety pathways and goes hand in hand with the recently revitalised swim and survive program.



> WORKING WITH REFUGEES

Local advocacy and volunteer group, the Refugee and Migrant Swimming Project, commenced delivery of a community Learn to Swim program in February 2022 involving 20 local adult refugee/migrant participants. Royal Life Saving ACT assisted the project to connect with key stakeholders, obtain funding for delivery, and develop a suitable program with consideration given to participants' previous experiences and perceptions. As part of the wholistic program, Royal Life Saving ACT facilitated a face-to-face workshop for program participants at local river swimming location – Pine Island in April 2022.

The workshop consisted of a CPR session plus a guided tour of the area. The participants were able to safely familiarise themselves with the river location, and learn about the hazards, risks and risky behaviours common to these environments. This workshop was particularly heartfelt given many of the attendees were friends and family of local Canberran student Najeeb Rafee, who tragically drowned in a river in 2020. The Refugee and Migrant Swimming Project was established in his legacy.



CONTINUING WITH OUR VISION

We are now into the second year of our 2020–2023 Royal Life Saving Strategy.

Our vision and strategy are based on network insights, extensive analytics, and macro and micro trends across historical periods. Our strategic statement involves a reduction in fatal and non-fatal drownings via the provision of quality, evidence based and modern solutions. As a peak body, we play a vital role in leading and achieving these outcomes.

To help us achieve these outcomes a continued commitment to our core priorities is paramount.

> OUR VISION

A water loving nation free from drowning.

> OUR PURPOSE

To lead efforts to reduce drowning and increase swimming, water safety and lifesaving skills.

> CORE PRIORITIES

A. Resourceful & Vibrant Organisation

A strong, well-resourced and vibrant organisation with a focus on community safety and wellbeing.

B. Growth Through Leadership & Partnerships

Collaborative leadership and undisputable reputation across the community and with key stakeholders.

C. Innovative Solutions

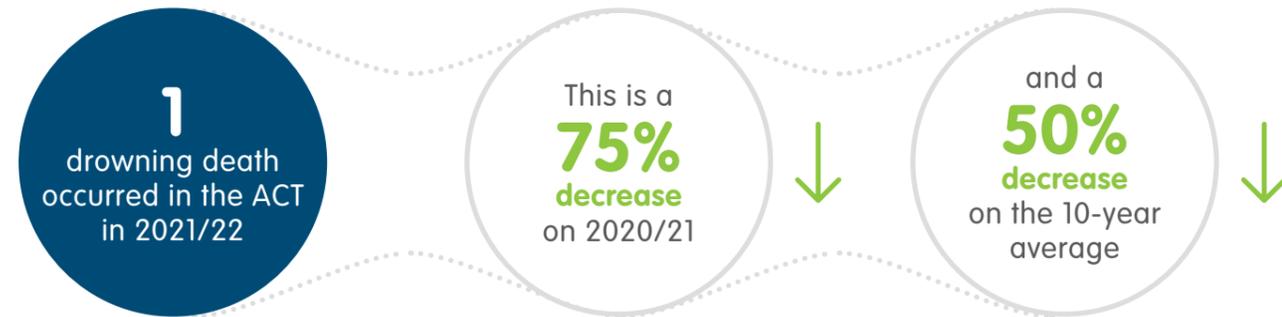
Improving our standards and providing innovative solutions that in turn provide for enjoyable aquatic experiences.

D. People: Stability & Sustainable

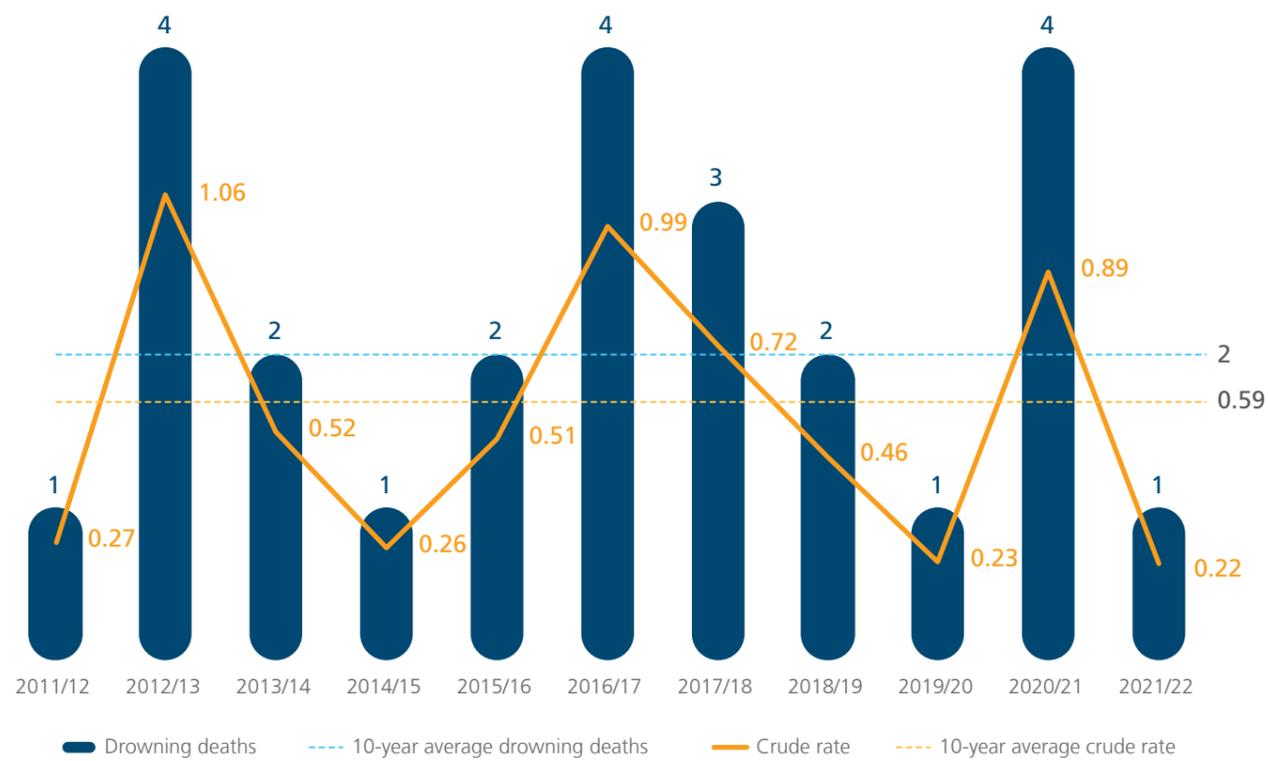
Continued stability and growth of our people.

ACT FATAL DROWNING REPORT

The 2021-22 ACT Drowning Report has reported 1 fatal drowning. This is a significant decrease from last year and against the 10-year average.



Drowning deaths and death rates in the Australian Capital Territory from 2011/12 to 2021/22 and the 10-year average



READ THE REPORT AND WATCH VIDEO
royallifesaving.com.au/NDR2022

ACT Case study

ACT Infant CPR Awareness course

During April and June 2022, Royal Life Saving ACT offered free Infant CPR awareness sessions for new parents and caregivers in the ACT, with a child under 12 months old. Over 80 parents and caregivers have attended the free 90min sessions, focusing on CPR awareness and knowledge specific to infants.

Along with CPR awareness, parent responsibility around water is a key focus of the workshop. A supporting resource has been developed, targeted at Dads and their role in maintaining vigilance for their own safety around water, as much as their baby's. A "Dear Daddy..." letter is written from the baby's point of view and asks Dads to look after themselves when in and around the water.

The reason for focusing on Dad's specifically, is that adult males are consistently and tragically over-represented in drowning statistics, making up over 80% of drowning deaths in Australia, with many families losing fathers, grandfathers, sons and uncles every year. The resource was designed to prompt Dads to not just consider water safety for their children but for themselves and set a good example as role models for their children throughout their early formative years.

Royal Life Saving ACT has partnered with local stakeholders to continue to offer this program free to new ACT parents for the remainder of 2022.



SUMMER IN PROFILE

Royal Life Saving Summer Drowning Report 2021-22

Royal Life Saving's annual Summer Drowning Toll showed a 30 per cent increase in drowning deaths across Australia in 2021-22, 20% of summer drowning deaths were flooding-related.

18 per cent of all drowning deaths over summer occurred on a public holiday. The two single days with the highest drowning deaths were both public holidays during the Christmas – New Year period.

The combination of extreme weather including flooding on the east coast and prolonged heat waves on the west coast, the easing of COVID-19 restrictions enabling people to travel all played a role in drowning risk over the summer months.

Comparing to the Summer Drowning Toll numbers from the previous five summers (2016-17 to 2020-21):

- › Drowning deaths among people aged 35–64-years are on the rise.
- › In comparison, drowning deaths among people aged 18-34 years are decreasing.
- › Children aged 0-17 years consistently account for the lowest numbers of drowning deaths over summer.
- › Drowning at inland locations decreased, while coastal drowning deaths increased.
- › The numbers of visitors to natural aquatic waterways have also risen, meaning more people are swimming, boating, fishing, and socialising, on and around the water.

This finding was supported by a nationwide community survey conducted for the consecutive second year by Roy Morgan on behalf of Royal Life Saving. The research tracked people's participation and activity around water, finding 52 per cent of people visited an aquatic location in the past three months (January-March), and social gathering at all aquatic locations were up by 10 per cent compared to last year.

The Summer Drowning Toll could not capture any alcohol involvement in the drowning deaths recorded. However, the Roy Morgan survey data reported around half of all Australians drink alcohol around the water, and about a quarter sometimes go in the water after drinking.

The Summer Drowning Toll 21-22 demonstrated that drowning risk is always present, regardless of weather and water conditions. Heavy rain and flooding meant there was unexpected exposure to water where we least expect it, and people may not be aware of some of these risks and how to respond to the changing conditions.

Conversely, the warm weather encouraged people into the water to cool off. However even when the getting into the water is a planned activity, we still need to be aware of safety precautions such as supervising young children, avoiding alcohol and wearing lifejackets when out on the water or fishing.

Several factors are likely to have contributed to increased drowning over the 2021-22 summer. Firstly, we acknowledge the devastating impact of flooding on our communities and the lives lost from flooding in December and again in February and March.

The nature of La Niña weather patterns this summer provided heavy rain for much of this period, however there were still periods of heatwaves across the country that coincided with the Christmas-New Year break when the highest number of people drowned.

Easing of Covid-19 restrictions and re-opening of state borders in December saw the increased mobility of people, travelling inter and intra-state, as well as many people taking extra time off this summer, potentially exposing more people to water, adults and children alike. Visitor numbers to aquatic locations appear higher than last summer, indicating that visitor numbers are returning to pre-Covid levels (summer 2019-20), before Covid-19 restrictions were introduced in March 2020.

A combination of people being off work and school, being able to travel interstate, both hot and wet weather and increased visitation to aquatic locations combined are likely to have contributed to the high number of drowning deaths over summer 2021-22.

While some of these factors are beyond our control, we can continue to raise awareness and promotion of key water safety messages. Although the numbers of children drowning remain low, it is essential that supervision messages for all age groups are constantly promoted over the summer period, especially during the Christmas-New Year period where the highest numbers of children drowned.

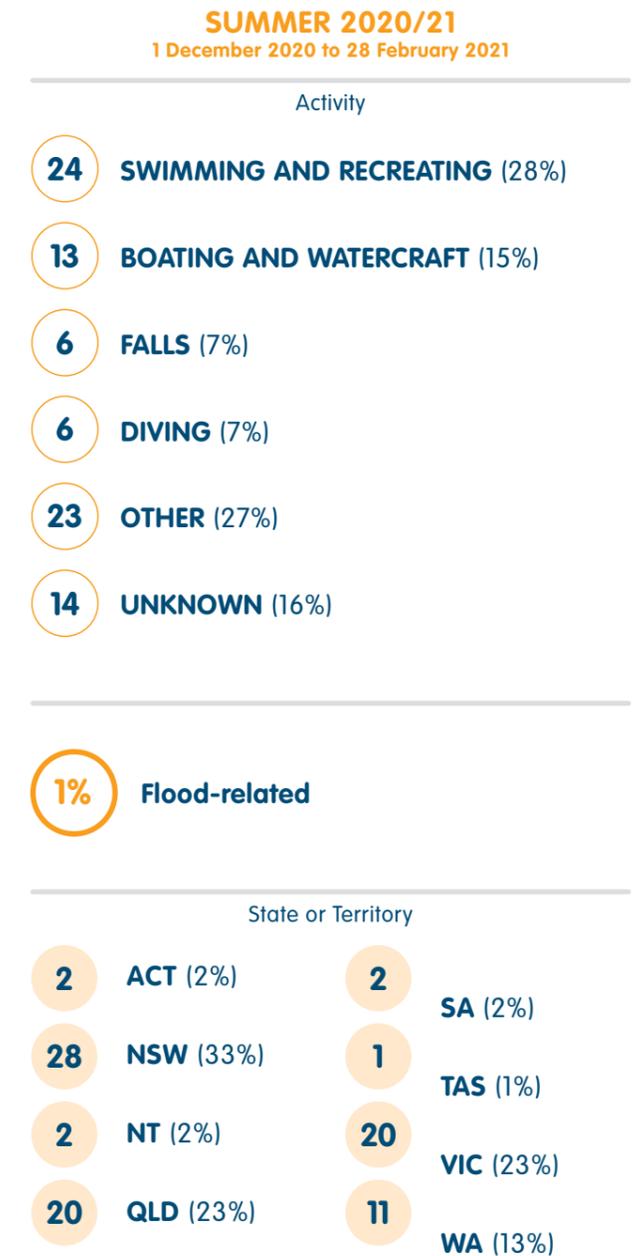
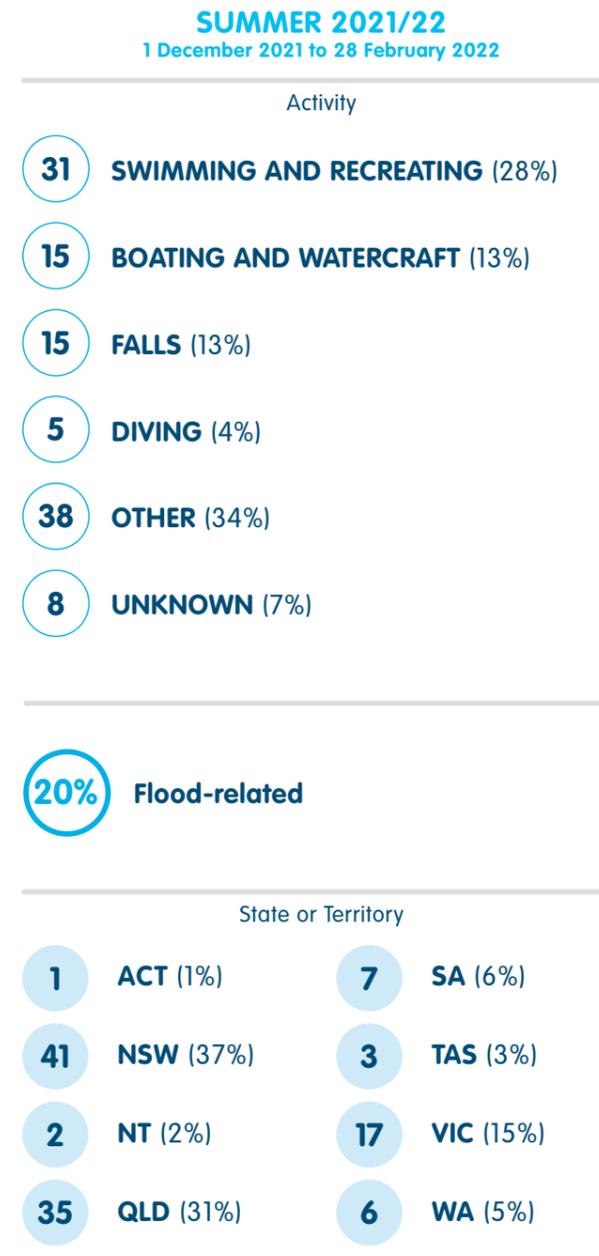
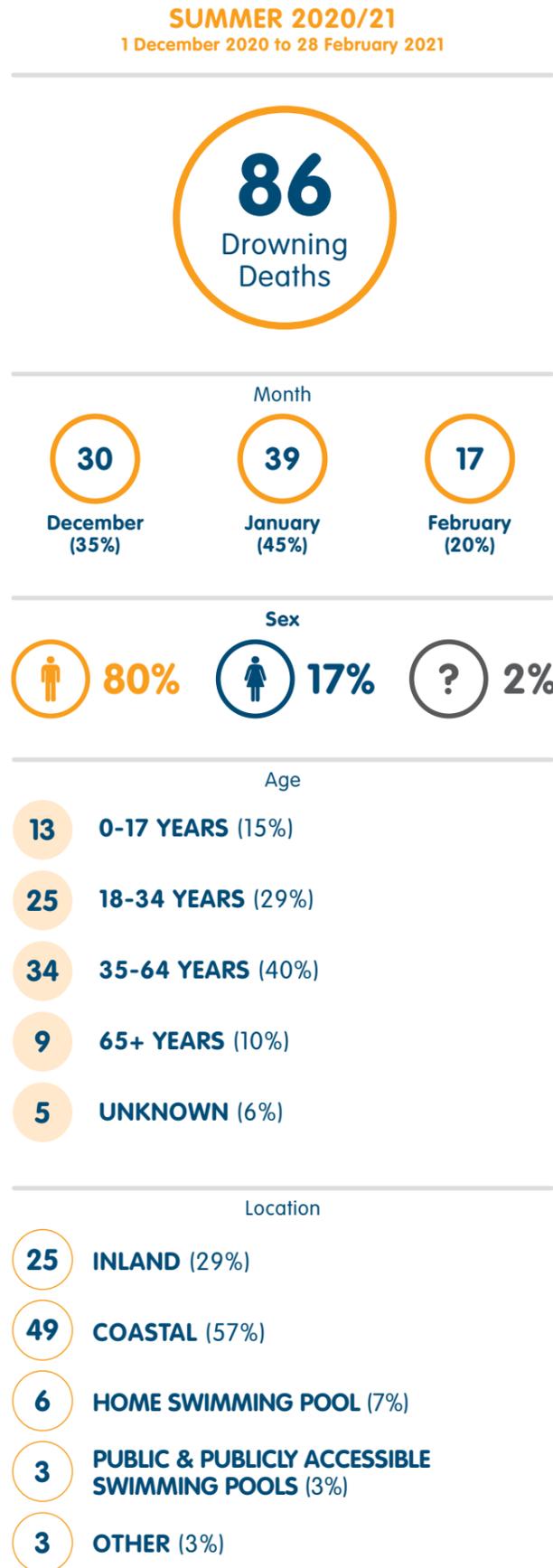
The increasing trend of adults aged 35-64 years warrants a tailored approach to water safety awareness for this demographic. More research is required to better understand the role of weather and climate change on drowning.



READ THE REPORT
[royallifesaving.com.au/
summerdrowningtollreport2021-22](https://royallifesaving.com.au/summerdrowningtollreport2021-22)



SUMMER DROWNING REPORT 2021/22 SNAPSHOT



Location definitions

Inland – includes rivers, lakes and dams
Coastal – includes beaches, coastal rocks and oceans
Home swimming pools – includes home pools, portable pools
Public and publicly accessible pools – includes aquatic facilities, resorts
Other - includes rescue, jumped in, fishing and rock fishing, swept away and swept in

Disclaimer – Media Analysis Only

2021/22 figures shown are derived from media reports only. As such, they should be considered interim, pending the outcome of ongoing coronial investigations.

2020/21 figures are derived from media reports and may vary from coronial statistics.

These are unprecedented times for Australia and the consequences of recent events on aquatics are, and will continue to be profound. All involved in swimming, water safety and lifesaving have been significantly challenged. Despite many setbacks, Royal Life Saving remains confident and well positioned to lead future endeavours and continue to support the communities of Tasmania.

➤ NATURAL DISASTERS CONTINUE

Many of our communities are still recovering from devastating fires, prolonged drought, and recent floods. Coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic many are still seeking to return to a degree of normality. The impact of these concurrent events may never be fully understood or realised.

Royal Life Saving will continue to work with its key partners and networks particularly in locations where hardship and disadvantage is evident, and support is needed.

➤ IMPACTED CHILDREN

The last 12 months have witnessed a significant reduction of learn to swim programs across Tasmania. Closures and health orders limited opportunities for the aquatic sectors ability to provide vital services. The repercussions of limited aquatic exposure on children are yet to be determined. For many the capacity to “catch-up” may never be possible.

Royal Life Saving will prioritise its resources to support children and the need to ensure a balanced swimming and water safety education is accessible for all. Developing resilience is paramount to reduce aquatic risk amongst our vulnerable.

➤ INDUSTRY INTERRUPTIONS

Our industry has been burdened by forced closures which in turn has left many with ongoing financial worries leading to future business concerns. Continuing interruption may lead to some closing their doors reducing the community’s access to swimming and water safety programs.

Royal Life Saving will continue to seek opportunities to support the aquatic sector through its government liaisons and advocacy solutions.

➤ WORKFORCE SHORTFALL

With forced closures and reduced access to aquatic programs the sector witnessed much of its workforce leave in pursuit of other forms of stable employment. The loss of quality swim teachers in particular is of concern and has direct consequences on program outcomes and participant benchmark achievements.

Royal Life Saving will work on strategies that seek to re-activate the workforce to enable aquatic facilities to continue to provide key services. In addition, greater focus will be applied to providing professional development pathways to ensure future sector employees are supported.

➤ COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE

For many in our community the COVID-19 pandemic has led to isolation and the need to refrain from coming together with others. The concept of re-engaging with others is still a daunting issue and will take time for many. It is important, at the right time, that parents re-visit their local swim school to continue with their child’s swimming and water safety development.

Royal Life Saving will undertake public awareness campaigns to remind parents of the health, social and physical benefits of aquatic programs.

In response to world health and environmental impacts, Royal Life Saving is committed to developing a proactive response that builds capacity and ensures our communities are provided with the resources and support they need in an ever-changing world.

➤ ONGOING RELEVANCE

We need to adapt quickly to changing political, stakeholder and community circumstances and opportunities.

We need to engage communities more strategically and consistently.

We need to analyse community patterns – population trends, aquatic usage, public policy.

We need to be innovative and invest in our future and develop our people.

➤ INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

More regular consultation and engagement with industry partners is essential as we enter new phases of operational priorities and post pandemic considerations. Collaboration and finding common voice ensure greater outcomes for the communities of Tasmania.

➤ PARTNERSHIPS

We will build on our partnership commitments to enable greater humanitarian outcomes and ensure those burdened by socio-economic disadvantage, isolation or prejudice received heightened support and assistance.

➤ STAKEHOLDER ADVOCACY

Royal Life Saving’s stakeholder investment strategy aims to build awareness via strong advocacy but provide solutions in which to address water safety priorities. Understanding fatal drowning triggers and causal patterns enables us to develop interventions or solutions that change behaviour or build resilience and skill.

In FY23, we will begin to implement our framework for measuring social impact across our strategic priorities.

➤ TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL

Technology is a key enabler of Royal Life Saving strategy. We are leveraging digital, data and automation to improve our products, processes and systems to better meet the needs of our communities. We continue to build on our strong technology foundations and have the following key priorities:

- **Keep the business safe and running**
COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of being a resilient business that can adapt to changes in our operating environment and respond to ever increasing cybersecurity threats.
- **Architect for the future**
Simplifying our technology architecture to make it more efficient and our systems more flexible.
- **Unleash data, digital and automation**
Create more personalised and seamless customer experiences
- **Transform our ways of working**
Building and improving our internal capabilities and better leveraging our technology and business process partners.





Resourceful & Vibrant Organisation

> GOAL

A strong, well-resourced and vibrant organisation with a focus on community safety and wellbeing.

Lead strategies to facilitate healthy, active and skilled communities through innovative, reliable and quality solutions together with Government, the Community, the Aquatic Industry and Corporate Sector support.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- > A1: Maintain and expand strategic relationships
- > A2: Implement initiatives aligned to core agenda and community supported priorities
- > A3: Increase visibility of brand, core message and protection of integrity

TARGET

- > Continued and increased strategic relationships and support to meet community needs and water safety priorities.
- > Expansive array of programs and services to support all communities across the ACT.
- > Increased organisational influence and presence amongst priority audience.



A1 “We collaborate and work alongside government and strategic entities to bring about effective and influential change, policy development, guideline creation and service provision. We assist and lead in the identification of priority water safety agendas and establish strategies based on evidence and expert opinion.”

2021-22 was impacted by environmental disasters and the pandemic which continued to provide unprecedented challenges impacting our capacity to deliver and service priority objectives with key partners. With extended closures and restricted opportunities many planned initiatives and opportunities were paused or rescheduled which in turn has long term implications for the communities of the ACT. A future focus on increasing healthy and active aquatic participation will be a priority for Royal Life Saving and its community and government partners.

A2 “We address key water priorities through targeted awareness, education, training or tailored solution. We engage communities to ensure relevance and suitability to ensure long-term benefit and outcome.”

Over the last 12 months our children and vulnerable communities have had traditional swimming and water safety education significantly disrupted. Closures and workforce losses have impacted the timing and availability of traditional services. As we overcome COVID-19 challenges, there will be increased emphasis and support into the future to ensure our children have access to a balanced swimming and water safety program. The support of the aquatic, education network and community will undoubtedly be vital in addressing any gaps or disadvantage.

A3 “We plan and coordinate strategies that bring about sector awareness and organisational intent. Our reputation and status are highly valued and brings trust to messaging and advice. We partner with key stakeholders to maximise exposure and acceptance.”

As a nation, we love water, from our local pool, lake or river or to our beaches and bays. Many consider themselves competent in and around the water, but each year hundreds drown, while many more have close escapes. Often we over-estimate our aquatic skill level and place ourselves or others at potential risk.

COVID 19

We’ve all missed out on so much because of COVID-19. Swim schools and local pools across the country, have been hit hard by mandated closures and restrictions. It is estimated that millions of lessons have been missed. This threatens to have tragic consequences for many Australians and may create a generation of non-swimmers now and in the future.

> ONLY 35% ARE SWIMMING

only 35% of the 3-6 year age group are currently attending learn to swim lessons.

> CHILDREN DROP OUT AT 8 YEARS OLD

Children are dropping out of lesson around 8 years old, well before they have developed a comprehensive set of swimming skills.

> 40% DON'T REACH NATIONAL BENCHMARK

40% of children are unable to meet the national swimming and water safety benchmark.

Research shows that almost half of 12 years-olds can't swim continuously for 50 metres or float for 2 minutes in deep water – a basic swimming and water safety benchmark. Disturbingly, COVID-19 led closures have amplified a long-term trend of children in this critical age group not taking or continuing lessons. Given our lifestyle, swimming is a vital life skill. Not being able to swim diminishes the enjoyment of life and puts lives at risk.

“Royal Life Saving ACT has a responsibility to leverage its brand and reputation to ensure all communities have access to vital swimming and water safety programs.”

> **The generosity of our supporters ensures elevated engagement to meet the needs of disadvantaged communities.**



Life is better when we swim.
WE SWIM CAMPAIGN.

We Swim is inspiring parents across Australia to take action to ensure their children enjoy all the benefits of swimming, from the fun stuff like splashes, dives and races to the many health and safety benefits of being in, on and around the water.

Whether children are new to swimming or have dropped out too early – the aim is to ensure all children stay in lessons long enough to achieve and exceed the national benchmark for swimming and water safety, to swim continuously for 50 metres and float in deep water for two minutes by 12 years of age.

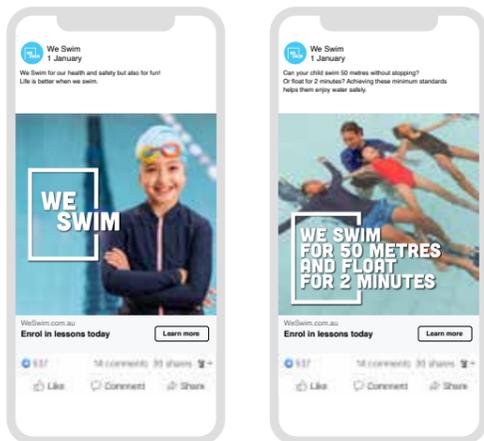
Campaign Activity

The We Swim campaign was launched in December 2021 to industry with a small PR push on our owned social and digital channels from 16 December 2021 until March 2022.

Campaign Results

Campaign Resources included Toolkit, Videos, Digital Displays, Posters and Social Media Assets.

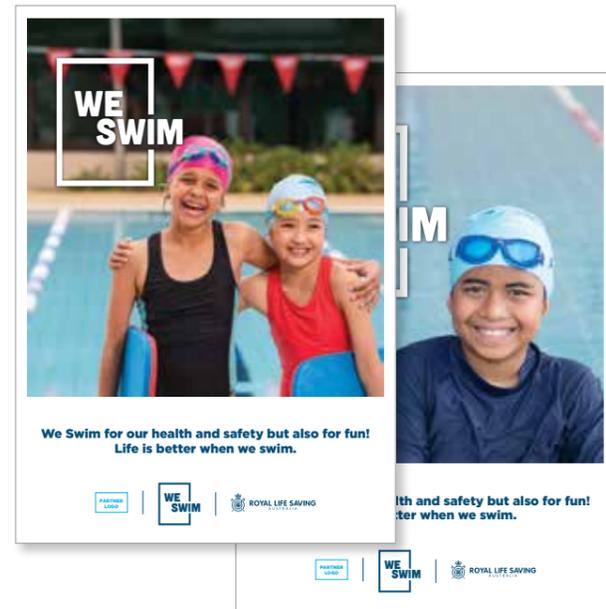
Social Media



Digital Displays



Posters



Videos



Visit: royallifesaving.com.au/weswim

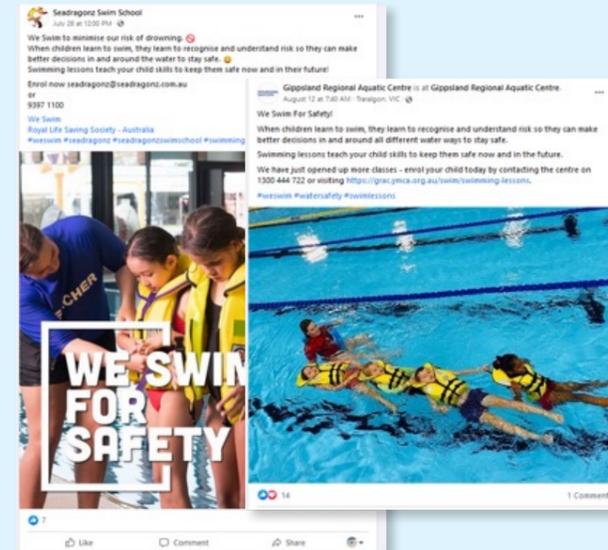
900+ Supporters have joined the We Swim movement

From large aquatic facilities to local swim schools - the aquatic industry were encouraged to sign up to receive the Campaign Supporters Toolkit with all the resources and key messages to share with their local community.

The campaign was well received by industry with following key partners committing to the campaign and sharing campaign resources and social assets amongst their networks:

- Aligned Leisure
- Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association
- Australian Swim Schools Association
- Belgravia Leisure
- BlueFit
- Jump Swim Schools
- Kids Alive Do the Five
- SPASA Australia
- Swimming Australia
- YMCA

With the industry hit hard by COVID-19 and further lockdowns across January 2022, combined with an industry still in recovery (with staff shortages) there was a delay in making a bigger PR push until mid-end 2022.



> ADULT SWIM SKILLS

Adult learn to swim classes are an important means of reducing the drowning rates in Australia, but little is known about who attends them and how much they learn.

Research by Royal Life Saving Society – Australia aimed to shed light on who attends adult swimming programs, how long they are in lessons and how much they are spending on classes. It also highlights the types of adult swimming and water safety programs offered and charts the improvement in swimming and water safety skills.

This study identified that a variety of swimming programs are available around Australia for adults, including public swimming lessons, subsidised lessons, and fully funded programs, with most adults in swimming classes attending just nine lessons on average – approximately five hours in the water.

The Australian Water Safety Strategy 2030 identifies swimming and water safety skills as a key factor for reducing drowning among all age groups, however this study found that most adults taking swim lessons are only acquiring basic skills in the water.

Regardless of the type of program they were attending, and how long they had been attending lessons for, the study found that most adults were unable to swim more than 25 metres upon completion of their program. Just eight per cent could reach the National Benchmarks set for 12-year-olds at the end of their program.

Royal Life Saving Research Manager Stacey Pidgeon said that while many swim schools offer swimming programs for adults, this study highlights more could be done to align adult swimming and water safety programs with the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework. This would ensure that adults develop a range of swimming and water safety skills, just as children do in their lessons.

“It’s fantastic to see that adults are taking the plunge and learning to swim. However, we need to better understand the needs of men, who are more at risk of drowning yet are less likely to take up adult swimming classes,” Ms Pidgeon said.

“There is an opportunity to enhance existing programs or develop new programs that better meet the needs of adult swimmers, especially men.

“Our research found that adult swimmers were more likely to come from higher socio-economic backgrounds, so we need to look at ways to reduce the cost barriers and consider other factors that may influence adults to enrol and attend swimming lessons.”

Previous research conducted by Royal Life Saving has reported that adults may face multiple barriers in attending swimming programs beyond just the cost of lessons, including a fear of water, access to childcare, available times of programs and cultural appropriateness of programs.

This research has been used to inform the development of Royal Life Saving’s new adult Swim and Survive curriculum.

Profile of adults attending swimming programs



Female



Average age



Are aged 35-44 years



77% of adult swimming lessons were attending one 30-minute group lesson per week



READ THE REPORT
royallifesaving.com.au/analysisofadultswimskills





Growth Through Leadership & Partnerships

> Goal

Collaborative leadership and undisputable reputation across the community and with key stakeholders.

Grow strong and effective partnerships, collaborations and alliances that support strategic objectives, expand our influence and increase aquatic participation skills and knowledge and reduce fatal and non-fatal drowning.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- > B1: Maintain and expand sector leadership and peak authority status.
- > B2: Maintain and increase strategies to inform and engage stakeholders.
- > B3: Increase commitments to research and innovative developments.

TARGET

- > Continued recognisable status as peak authority.
- > Increased co-branding and recognition with key stakeholders.
- > Increased evidence portfolio to support priorities.



B1 “We work closely with sector stakeholders and collaborate with other peak organisations to cultivate and leverage partnerships within the sector and lead initiatives to enhance alignment and cohesion. We provide insights and capacity building strategies and foster cross-section collaboration and partnerships to improve sector sustainability and performance.”

Throughout 2021-22, Royal Life Saving remained focused on supporting and expanding key partnership initiatives. There was a genuine need to remain focused and purposeful especially throughout the 12-month period. There was an array of opportunities and developments that enhanced our leadership status and addressed sector performance.

B2 “We undertake diverse and innovative strategies to bring relevance and understanding across our communities. We seek to provide solutions that engage our stakeholders and supply them with genuine, trusted strategies to encourage aquatic participation in an appropriate and acceptable manner.”

Many of our communities are engaging with our inland waterways as locations for recreation and enjoyment. As these environments become more readily accessible their utilisation will increase. Our research indicates that there are many within our communities who are at higher risk of fatal or non-fatal drowning at inland waterways. Broad education, risk and awareness strategies are essential to ensure these groups know the risks and required behaviours and attitudes to utilise such venues safely.

B3 “We invest in research that provides guidance and direction to prioritise agendas, appropriate solutions and community benefit.”

Royal Life Saving’s advocacy and policy work in drowning prevention and water safety is based on in-depth research and associated analysis. Royal Life Saving has a strong and skilled research team that works alongside key academic institutions and partners to provide reports, journals and position statements that abide by the highest standard and rigours.

Our research capacities include the collation of fatal and non-fatal drowning incidents and patterns, analysis of aquatic user behaviours and attitudes, benchmarking reports on aquatic performance and evaluation reports on social, health and economic considerations relating to the aquatic sector and broader community. Our organisational research commitment and intelligence gathering nationally has positioned us well and ensured our lead role in the development and publication of key strategic documents including Australian Water Safety Strategy 2030 and the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework. Both documents guide our national priorities into the future.



Drowning Amongst Older People Community research

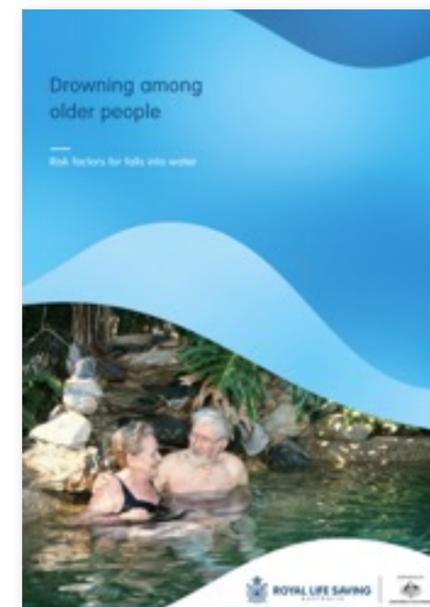
Physical activity is important for the maintenance and improvement of physical, mental and emotional health, particularly in the later years of life when increased quantity of life does not guarantee increased quality.

Aquatic activity is low impact, meaning it is suitable for older people who may have physical limitations and injuries to consider, however, the drowning risk in this demographic is increased by pre-existing medical conditions, medication usage and reduced physical capacity.

Between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2019, 596 people aged 65 years and over died from drowning in Australia. Of these, 20% fell into water. The largest number of fall-related drowning deaths occurred in NSW (47%)

This study:

- Investigated drowning deaths among older people with a focus on those who fell into water.
- Identified the risk factors for falls into water among older people.
- Provided recommendations to reduce fall-related drowning among older people.



World Health Organisation Preventing drowning.

The World Health Organization has released a new report providing practical guidance on three ways to reduce drowning that can be used in low-, middle- and high-income countries across the world.

The Preventing Drowning Report is designed for the provision of day-care, basic swimming and water safety skills, and safe rescue and resuscitation training.

Today, drowning claims the lives of over 230,000 people every year – the vast majority in low- and middle-income countries.

The World Health Organization recommends programme managers fully implement all practical guidance provided for each intervention, and that those tasked with approving or monitoring such programmes also ensure full adherence to the practical guidance in this resource.



➤ Building collaborative networks expands our influence and mission.

> Royal Life Saving reminds parents to prepare for the unexpected.
ALWAYS KEEP WATCH.

Royal Life Saving's Keep Watch campaign has made significant inroads in helping to reduce drowning in children aged 0-4 since it was launched nearly 30 years ago. Drowning deaths however remain the leading cause of preventable death in this age group.

Always Keep Watch:

- > **Supervise.** Actively supervise children around water.
- > **Restrict.** Restrict children's access to water.
- > **Teach.** Teach children water safety skills.
- > **Respond.** Learn how to respond in the case of an emergency.

Royal Life Saving launched the Keep Watch campaign on Tuesday 9th November in time for summer to remind parents and carers about the risks of child drowning.

Research figures showed that, over the past 19 years, 532 children aged zero to four years drowned. Of these, 40% were children aged one year who drowned.

For every fatal drowning in this age group, a further eight children are admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning. Some children sustain lifelong brain injuries.

The majority of deaths in children aged zero to four occurred in backyard swimming pools (52%), with 38% occurring during the summer months. Accidental falls into water was the leading activity prior to drowning in this age group, accounting for 77% of all deaths. Almost all of these deaths were due to a lack of active adult supervision.

Campaign Activity

1. Broad Media Outreach: TV, Radio, Print and Online News
2. Community Service Announcement Placement
3. Online Digital and Social Media

Campaign Resources

Campaign resources were developed and deployed across multiple media channels (inc. TV and social) to support the campaign including:

30 Second CSA – Keep Watch to keep your child safe.

Kids will be kids. And we love them all. Cute, funny, quiet, wild, angelic, studious, all of them with their own unique personalities, all of them curious and unpredictable. One day avid explorers and princesses the next, with everything in between. Which is why we love them even more!

But they have one thing in common: Kids can't help themselves around water, you need to. Keep Watch.

15 Second CSA - Supervise. Restrict. Teach. Respond.

Distractions are dangerous. Remain ever vigilant and always watching. Royal Life Saving urges all parents to Supervise, Restrict, Teach and Respond.

Supervision is the single most important thing you can do to keep your children safe around water. Any distraction is dangerous and puts young children at risk around water. Whether it is a phone or social media use, or carrying out everyday tasks, such as leaving a child unsupervised momentarily to cook, take the rubbish out or collect the washing, no task is worth your child's life.

Campaign Results



TV, Radio, Print and Online
Audience Reach = 5,048,328
Media Articles = 145



Community Service Announcement Placement
Channel 7, WIN, Foxtel and Channel 31 in Melbourne



Social Media Own Channels
Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter

Community Service Announcement



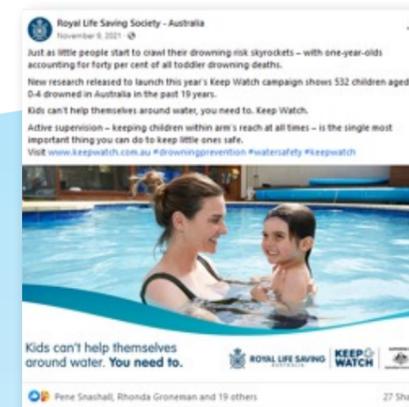
Keep Watch is proudly supported by



Social Media Tiles



Social Media Posts



Key Media Highlights

> **Television**

- Two national features Sunrise (Channel 7) and News Breakfast (ABC TV).
- News package out of Channel 10 Brisbane that ran in the metropolitan cities on the evening news – Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.
- Channel 9 evening news in Sydney

> **Radio**

- Over eighty five radio interviews nationwide with feature radio interviews with:
- ABC's Radio Sydney afternoon program
 - 3AW's afternoon program.
 - ABC's national Radio News Breakfast program

> **Print**

Australian Associated Press distributed widely with coverage in The Guardian, The New Daily, The Herald Sun, Melbourne and Courier Mail, Brisbane.

> **Online coverage**

Including Channel 7 and the ABC.

Hitting the big 4-0 is a brilliant reason to celebrate, especially when you have 15 million people to celebrate with you.

That is how many people across Australia who at some point in their lives learned to swim in the Royal Life Saving Society – Australia Swim and Survive program.



Whether you went through weekly swimming lessons, holiday intensives or school classes, Swim and Survive is at the core of learning to swim.

The stage-by-stage approach, regularly recognising achievements and encouraging children to strive for the next level has proven popular with generations of swimmers.

Royal Life Saving National Manager Education, Penny Larsen said it had been heartening to see so many people hold celebrations at pools across the country.

“It’s wonderful to see how much people have taken the Swim and Survive program into their hearts,” Ms Larsen said.

“Multiple generations of families have been through Swim and Survive and while it has adapted to take on new evidence over the years, at its core it is still about the love of swimming.”

“When Swim and Survive started, the team behind developing the program never imagined the effect the Swim and Survive program would have on the development of swimming and water safety skills of Australians and reducing the drowning rate in children aged five to 14 years. They would have been delighted at the influence of Swim and Survive on the structured swimming curriculum that underpins programs available today.”

In addition to birthday parties, children from across the nation entered a colouring competition and persuasive writing competition.

“We had great trouble judging the competitions because the standard was so high,” Ms Larsen said.

“The time and effort put in by all of the children was impressive. It is so encouraging to read the convincing points made in the persuasive writing competition on why it is important to Swim and Survive.”

“It shows that children participating in swimming and water safety education have an awareness of the risks and understand and value of learning to Swim and Survive.”

Royal Life Saving is grateful to Speedo who supplied prize packs for the winning entries.

For further information visit:
SwimAndSurvive.com.au



Celebrating around the country



Colouring Competition Finalists





> Goal

Improving our standards and providing innovative solutions that in turn enable enjoyable aquatic experiences.

Ensuring quality, targeted, evidence based and impactful strategies, programs, products and services that resource our communities with skills, knowledge and capacity.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- > C1: Maintain and expand education and training solutions.
- > C2: Implement sport and active recreation programs.
- > C3: Maintain and expand our health and community education developments.
- > C4: Maintain and grow our product solutions.
- > C5: Maintain and expand aquatic industry services.

TARGET

- > Increased involvement in a Royal Life Saving training or education program.
- > Increased participation in our sporting agenda.
- > Increased community development programs servicing the community.
- > Increased use of products to support programs and services.
- > Increased utilisation and expansion of our risk management expertise.

**LIFE
SAVING
BUOY**
**Emergency
use only**

C1 “We are a leading institution in the provision of education and training solutions across many sectors. Our focus remains on providing and developing solutions to address water safety priorities, sector resilience and community preparedness. We provide innovative solutions to meet the diverse needs of our communities. We utilise flexible, modern solutions to ensure relevance and suitability. We ensure access and equity and ensure high levels of stakeholder satisfaction.”

Over the last 12 months, Royal Life Saving has been committed to ensuring our communities have access to high quality education and training solutions. The setbacks for the sector over the last number of years have required Royal Life Saving to deliver high quality programs and services to ensure our broader communities are serviced by accredited and skilled sector employees. Across FY22, Royal Life Saving delivered more than 2,300 vocational outcomes.

C2 “We provide a boutique sporting option that leverages off our swimming and water safety experiences. Our relationships with the aquatic, education and sporting sectors provide a unique opportunity to expand and rejuvenate our sporting and active recreation endeavours. Our strategies will lead to increased opportunities for participation and promote inclusion.”

Sport and active recreation play an important role across all ACT communities. It can bring communities together; contribute positively to community identity, connectedness, and sense of place, promote social interaction and inclusion; and, play an important role in providing opportunities for physical activity and improved health and wellbeing outcomes. Further expansion opportunities are planned for 2022- 23 and further implementation and support of online coaching and officiating programs. This will ensure that future infrastructure and qualified individuals to support program implementation.

C3 “We partner with strategic organisations and partners to develop and implement new strategies that address our community water safety priorities. Our focus remains on those who “miss out” and seek to ensure a balanced water safety education is available to all. Our research partners enable high quality evidence platforms in which to guide our influence and priority.”

Swimming skills and water safety knowledge among overseas visitors is known to be less robust than those who have grown up in Australia. An increase in new residents from a range of countries and cultures in recent years has important implications for drowning prevention strategies to ensure everyone recreating in and around Australia’s waterways remains safe.

On average, 274 people drown in Australia each year, with around one in four people who drown being born overseas. Of these overseas-born deaths, most were men, and most drowned in rivers while swimming, with alcohol being a significant risk factor; these findings mirror those relating to drowning deaths of Australian-born people.

C4 “We partner with product suppliers that provide solutions and tools to assist with the provision of education and training solutions. Our involvement also includes the coordination and service delivery of lifesaving devices across communities.”

The ability to service our organisational customers is reliant on a supplier network that provides quality service and product. Additionally, a mutual understanding of our client needs ensures Royal Life Saving receives prompt service and customised solutions. Often our products are aligned to rescue and response scenarios meaning the consequence of underperforming product can be critical.

Royal Life Saving has established a number of important supplier networks and partnerships that support our training and education agenda and the aquatic industry.

C5 “We lead the planning and coordination of risk minimisation strategies in partnership with the aquatic and government sector. We seek to provide high-level advice to aquatic practitioners to maximise the aquatic experience for the community and assist in meeting legislative and best practice demands.”

Australia’s public aquatic facilities generate significant economic benefits for their patrons and for the Australian health care system. Increased physical activity, in the form of swimming and other aquatic exercise, leads to a valuable improvement in health outcomes. In addition, public aquatic facilities provide Australians with a safe place at which to familiarise themselves with the water, supported by lifeguards, good visibility and marked depths.

Our Aquatic Risk Management Services also extend to the provision of services to support risk minimisation across our inland waterways. Inland waterways account for more than a quarter of all drowning deaths. The flat, still surface of an inland waterway can give a false sense of security to patrons who visit these locations. With inland waterways experiencing dramatically increased visitation rates, it is critical that a range of strategies are implemented to reduce the risk of drowning in these locations.

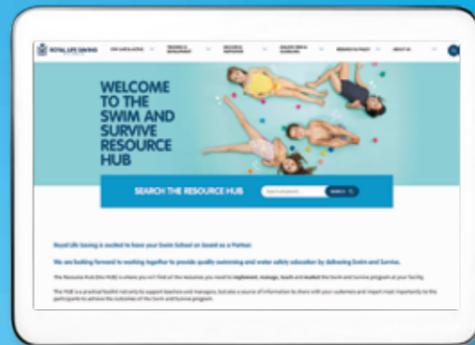


➤ **Meeting our customer needs ensures our services are relevant and appropriate.**

> SWIM AND SURVIVE RESOURCES HUB FOR PARTNERS

Royal Life Saving launched a new Swim and Survive Resources Hub to help support our partners across Australia. They don't just deliver Swim and Survive, they also work together with Royal Life Saving to prevent drowning, provide water safety education and promote safe active participation in aquatic activities.

Swim and Survive is a long-standing and respected swimming and water safety program and brand, and parents can rest easy knowing their child is getting the best water safety education aligned to national benchmarks. In the hub, partners can access resources to support implementation, program management, customer service, marketing and teacher training. Available resources include: Assessment Checklists, Activity Cards, Certificates, Conversion Chart, Curriculum Tables, Enrolment Enquiry Form, Lesson Plans, Must See Guides and Pathway Progression.



> CONNECTING ABILITIES AND ADULT CURRICULUM

Two new resources were developed over the past year including 'Connecting Abilities' and 'Adult Curriculum for Swim and Survive' as a strategy to increase inclusiveness and access.

Swimming is for everyone, and to help teachers engage with students who need adjustments to engage with mainstream swimming lessons, new resources were developed and launched as Connecting Abilities.

Connecting Abilities aims to provide reasonable adjustment for students who have (or may eventually have) the physical ability, cognitive function, and the comprehension of safety skills to take part in a swimming lesson with other students. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken by a provider or education deliverer to assist a person with disability to participate on the same basis as a person without a disability.

Support resources include:

- Group Classification including suggestions for adaption for each group
- Reasonable Adjustment Matrix
- Teaching Strategies
- Tips for Reasonable Adjustment

We encourage all Swim and Survive teachers to utilise the Connecting Abilities resources, available in the Swim and Survive Resource Hub.

A specific curriculum for adults and teens has been developed as part of the Swim and Survive suite of resources to provide a pathway of participation particularly for those that may be late starters or not had the opportunity to learn swimming and water safety at a younger age. The curriculum is broken up into four levels starting with foundation skills for beginners and progressing to more advanced skills to enable people to have the capability of completing lifesaving and career training programs.



> SKILLS

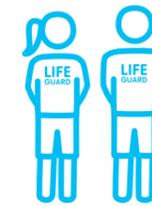
2,307 Vocational outcomes and increase of 5% over the 12 months.



1,714
CPR & FIRST AID



105
SWIM TEACHERS



350+
POOL LIFEGUARDS



120+
BRONZE MEDALLIONS



> GUIDELINES FOR INLAND WATERWAYS

New draft safety guidelines for the ownership, management and use of inland waterways to reduce the likelihood of a drowning or serious aquatic injury have been released for public consultation by Royal Life Saving.

The guidelines have been developed following a decade of research into drowning incidents in Australia's rivers, lakes, creeks, and other inland waterways, with more than 100 Australians noted to be drowning in inland waterways every year.

The guidelines provide practical guidance for facilitating inter-agency risk management planning and implementation, as well as practical steps for local government to take around swimming and recreation areas.

The guidelines emphasise risk management, the development of local water safety plans and community consultation. They also provide information on minimum water safety qualifications and training for employees as well as guidance on supervision ratios and similar requirements for users recreating and for providers of structured programs.

KEY DATA (2009/10 TO 2018/19)

1,009 Drowning deaths

101 Average deaths per year

TOP 3 ACTIVITIES

20% Swimming and recreating

19% Fall

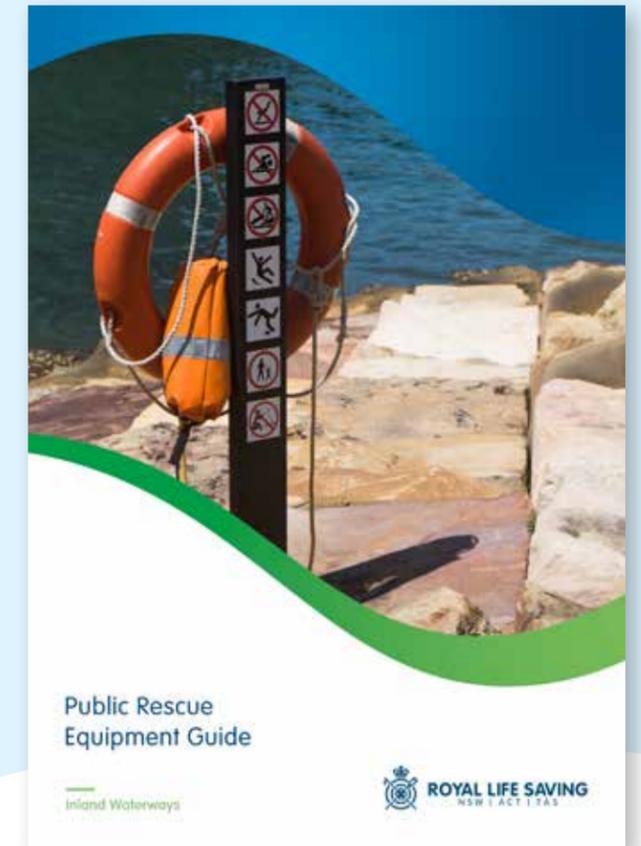
17% Non-aquatic transport

> AVAILABLE NOW!

PUBLIC RESCUE EQUIPMENT GUIDE

This Guide provides an insight into the considerations and planning for the deployment of Public Rescue Equipment.

As every aquatic location is different, it is important that aquatic safety risk assessments are undertaken prior to the implementation of any PRE. Consideration should be given to the appropriate type of PRE, its location, ongoing maintenance, community education and potential vandalism or theft.





People - Stability & Sustainable

> Goal

Continued stability and growth of our people.

Building and supporting a cohesive, sustainable and secure organisation that ensures long-term scope and cohesion.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- > D1: Advocate water safety priorities across all communities
- > D2: Deliver and maintain asset management and growth.
- > D3: Manage organisational risk and sustainability.
- > D4: Manage workforce acquisition, skills and retention.
- > D5: Meet legislative and organisational compliance requirements.

TARGET

- > Increased community activations.
- > Maintain sustainable assets to service communities.
- > Continue organisational stability through risk analysis and management.
- > Maintain a skilled workforce.
- > Ongoing compliance with legislative requirements and organisational excellence re environmental, financial and workforce practice.



D1 We lead the planning and coordination of water safety agenda across all communities. Our strategically located offices ensure relevance and suitability of local strategies to address priorities. Our networks enhance our provision and together we work to provide high quality solutions and experiences. Our ground level strategies remain at the forefront of our future.

› AQUATIC INDUSTRY REOPENS

The past 12 months have remained challenging for the aquatic industry as it begins its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant challenges soon emerged which in some parts are still unresolved:

- › Workforce shortages
- › Children not returning to lessons
- › Loss of talent / corporate knowledge
- › Rising cost of living / inflation providing upwards pressure on salary expectations
- › Difficulty re-qualifying staff who had missed two years of training

Post-lockdown shortages of qualified lifeguards and swimming teachers slowed down the industry's efforts to rebuild after the COVID-19 pandemic. Many pools are still struggling to find qualified staff to deliver water safety and swimming skills, as well as lifeguard services. This is a significant issue for an industry which really struggled to survive ongoing and sustained lockdowns.

COVID-19 has also amplified long-held concerns about falling swimming and water safety skills in primary school aged children. After two years of widespread pool closures and more than 10 million missed swimming lessons, Royal Life Saving is urging parents to enrol children in swimming lessons to avoid another summer of drowning.

Royal Life Saving analysis of enrolments of children in swimming lessons in November 2021 showed they decreased by at least 25 per cent nationwide compared to the same time the previous year, with the greatest impact among children aged between seven and 12 years old. Many are unlikely to return to swimming lessons. Previous Royal Life Saving research has reported that 75 per cent of children stop swimming lessons from eight years and around 40 per cent of children leave primary school without being able to achieve key swimming and water safety benchmarks.

Ordinarily, the school system is a critical safety net for children who cannot afford private swimming lessons. New AusPlay data also highlights that swimming lessons in school children (ages 5-14) are down 12 per cent from 2019 levels.

This data supports Royal Life Saving research reporting that many children may have stopped lessons altogether after COVID-19 forced the closure of aquatic centres across the country over the past two years, and highlights how in addition to the aquatic industry, schools need to re-prioritise in-water swimming and water safety activities for students with urgency.

These factors all lead to a system which is strained and unable to ensure all Australian children are able to participate in swimming and water safety lessons, as well as communities unable to participate to their full potential in aquatic physical activity.

These concerning trends are likely to lead to future impacts on the health system, higher rates of drowning in the future and a quality of life which misses its pre-pandemic levels. Australians love the water, and a vibrant and strong aquatic industry is vital to ensuring full physical activity participation and safety for all into the future.

In light of these challenges, supporting the aquatic industry and its workforce remains a key strategic priority for Royal Life Saving.

D2 We operate and maintain assets that provide communities with genuine access to programs and services.

› ESTABLISHING STANDARDS

We exist in an environment influenced by legislative and compliance requirements. We monitor and operate in accordance with standards and best practice that ensures operational integrity and respect.

NATIONAL AQUATIC INDUSTRY COMMITTEE

Establishing proactive agenda for the aquatic industry.

The National Aquatic Industry Committee (NAIC) has the goal of strengthening the health, safety and viability of aquatic facility ownership and operations across Australia.

The role of the committee is to:

- › Develop, review and authorise the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations
- › Facilitate discussion and advocacy for the future direction and support to the aquatic industry across Australia
- › Develop and maintain the National Aquatic Industry Strategy.
- › Review and make recommendations to Industry Skills bodies on behalf of the Aquatic Industry
- › Communicate and advocate the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations as industry standards developed by industry for industry.

The NAIC achieves its objectives by:

- › Enhancing the standing and reputation of the aquatic industry through the establishment and enforcement of universal and minimum standards for safe and sustainable aquatic facility operations
- › Improving the understanding of the aquatic industry through coordination, communication and consultation between the aquatic industry and peak bodies
- › Maintaining a robust evidence base for managing risk in aquatic facilities through research and evaluation
- › Developing frameworks and resources that improve the capabilities of the aquatic industry
- › Coordinating and regularly communicating to the aquatic industry



D3 We operate in a diverse and complex sector which is influenced by sector, community and government agenda. The not-for-profit sector faces unique challenges with adapting to consumer demand and sustainability in competitive environments. We need to ensure our future pathways are well considered and justified in line with governance expectation.

› SUPPORTING NETWORKS

We operate in a diverse and complex sector which is influenced by sector, community and government agenda. The not-for-profit sector faces unique challenges with adapting to consumer demand and sustainability in competitive environments. We need to ensure our future pathways are well considered and justified in line with governance expectation.

THE SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE AUSTRALIAN AQUATIC INDUSTRY

Industry Research

The report was launched on Tuesday 10 August 2021. The full report can be found at royallifesaving.com.au

The social, health and economic benefits of the aquatic industry to Australia are worth more than \$9 billion, research from Royal Life Saving Society - Australia and PricewaterhouseCoopers has shown.

The report, looked at the 2,113 publicly accessible aquatic facilities across the country, finding almost 90 percent of Australians live within a 20-minutes' drive of their nearest pool.

The report reinforces the myriad of ways that the aquatic industry benefits the Australian community and found that the industry:

- › Is a driver of economic activity throughout Australia, employing the equivalent of 33,600 full time employees and adding \$2.8 billion to gross domestic product (GDP)
- › Is a generator of \$2.5 billion in health benefits, ranging across a reduction in the burden of disease, improved mental health outcomes, reduced absenteeism, and reduced childhood drowning.
- › Is a provider of \$3.8 billion's worth of social benefits such as: enhancing an individual's leisure time or creating increased life satisfaction; by bringing people together; supporting more vulnerable groups; and supporting early learning.



D4 We strive for operational excellence and seek means to improve systems and processes to ensure quality outcomes. We commit to developing the workforce that services the aquatic sector, ensuring they possess the skills and drive to bring about desired objectives and meet the needs of the broader community.

› OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

We strive for operational excellence and seek means to improve systems and processes to ensure quality outcomes. We commit to developing the workforce that services the aquatic sector, ensuring they possess the skills and drive to bring about desired objectives and meet the needs of the broader community.

LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

Our Leadership Programs

Whether you're stepping into a team leadership role or are an experienced aquatic leader looking to build your skills we have a program to support you. Our suite of leadership programs strengthen and develop the abilities of participants and in turn, help them to build capability in the aquatic industry

Masterclasses

Our Masterclasses dive into core skill areas to help refine professional practice and build networks.

Webinars

Offered to aquatic industry employees looking for flexible learning option. Facilitated Q&A webinars by industry experts strengthen leadership competencies.

Networking Events

Our Event schedule engages and connects with Aquatic Industry colleagues in a structured and informative way.

Online Leadership Learning

Access over 11,000 professionally developed courses, available in 7 different languages with up to 50 courses added every month. Taught by leading experts in their field. Courses are modern, engaging and cross a broad selection of topics.

D5 We exist in an environment influenced by legislative and compliance requirements. We monitor and operate in accordance with standards and best practice that ensures operational integrity and respect.

› AUSTRALIAN POLICY AND CASE LAW FOR PUBLIC SAFETY IN INLAND WATERWAYS

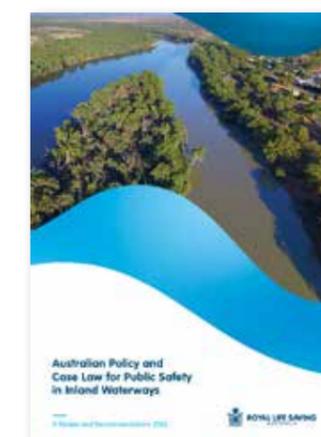
The Australian Policy and Case Law for Public Safety in Inland Waterways: A Review and Recommendations found that consistent public safety standards including industry guidelines are needed to support a reduction in drownings inland waterways.

In the 10 years to June 2021, 940 Australians lost their lives to drowning in inland waterways, with 70 per cent of those deaths occurring in regional and remote locations. Almost three-quarters of those who drowned were not visitors to the area. More than half the drowning deaths occurred in rivers with the remainder occurring in creeks, lakes, and dams.

The report reviewed the policy and governance frameworks relating to inland waterways, ocean beaches and aquatic facilities and all Australian coronial and legal liability cases involving inland waterway safety. The analysis found that in the absence of objective standards, courts tended to make detailed recommendations for specific locations which at times were inconsistent. Nationally consistent standards would enhance safety.

While Royal Life Saving has researched inland waterway safety previously, these findings increase our understanding of some issues faced by coroners in determining what measures are reasonable and practicable to introduce in open water environments such as rivers. It highlights where policies and frameworks are needed to promote safety for all communities, especially inland communities adjacent to rivers.

Royal Life Saving is committed to working with communities, governments and waterway owners and operators to ensure any future frameworks are industry-practical and encourage improvements to water safety.



READ THE REPORTS
royallifesaving.com.au/Aquatic-Risk-and-Guidelines

> Our Value

Royal Life Saving creates value through its inputs and core programs and services and resulting outputs (performance).

INPUTS

We utilise a range of resources and relationships to create value and deliver on our strategy and organisational purpose.

RELATIONSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS

Community support, integrity, and trust.

ENVIRONMENT

Implementation and integration of best-practice environmental policies and practices.

SYSTEMS & PROCESS

Data capabilities and insights to manage risk, deliver strong customer outcomes.

CUSTOMERS

Quality customer experience and service.

PEOPLE

Retaining and developing our people.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Effective and efficient use of assets.

FINANCE

Prudent financial management.

CORE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Education

Participation & Resilience

Training

Jobs & Compliance

Risk

Mitigation & Safety

Community Health

Behaviours & Attitudes

Community Culture

Diversity & Disadvantage

Lifesaving

Skilled People & Communities

OUTPUTS

We enhance the resilience of our communities by delivering high quality education and active participation solutions to thousands of individuals across ACT. We support a workforce and ensure workplace compliance through the delivery of vocational training solutions based on sector need.

We mitigate risk and provide safety solutions to support safe aquatic participation.

We create and modify behaviours to enable smart decisions in and around aquatic environments.

We engage and support our most disadvantaged and provide positive opportunities to bring about equality and we skill our communities to strengthen community cohesion and liveability.

VALUE OUTCOMES

Royal Life Saving maximises value for our communities by operating our organisation and assets efficiently and effectively, with sound financial management, development of our people, management of risks through systems and processes and the enhancement and development of our partnerships.

We operate with integrity, innovation, and humanitarian endeavour.



COMMONWEALTH COUNCIL HONOURS

Service Medal
 The Hon. Terrance John Higgins AO QC
 Mr. Kenneth Aplin
 Mr. Peter Granleese
 Mr. Kevin Graham
 Mr. Lyal Holley
 Mr. Tony Bandle
 Mr. Greg Bowler
 Mr. Harold James Hird OAM

AUSTRALIAN HONOURS

Fellow of the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia
 The Hon. Terrance John Higgins AO QC
 Mr. Geoff McGibbon
 Mr. Kevin Graham
 Mr. Ian Cocks
 Mr. Anthony Bandall
 Mr. Peter Granleese

Service Order of the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia
 Mrs. Christine McGibbon
 Mrs. Diane Cocks
 Meritorious Service Award
 The Hon. Terrance John Higgins AO QC
 Mr. Harold James Hird OAM

ACT BRAVERY AWARDS

Royal Life Saving Society - Australia Commendation for Bravery
 Mr. P. Zori
 Mr. D. McCaskill
 Mr. G. O’Niell
 Mr. M. Gilet
 Ms. N. Ballenden
 Mr. N. Hansford
 Constable R. Quilty, Australian Federal Police

Royal Life Saving Society - Australia Bravery Cross
 Mr. Neil Maher
 Miss Emily de Gier

Royal Life Saving Society - Australia Rescue Medal
 Miss Elise Waser
 Mr. Barton Waser
 Mr. John Waser
 Mr. Kevin Nash
 Mr. William Nash

Royal Life Saving Society - Australia Resuscitation Club Medal
 Mr. Neil Maher
 Mr. Paul Reynolds
 Mr. Alexander Mackie
 Ms. Brooke Smyth
 Mr. Samuel Murphy

LIFE MEMBERS

The Hon. Terrence John Higgins AO QC
 Mr. Geoff McGibbon
 Ms. Christine McGibbon
 Mr. Harold Hird OAM
 Mr. Lyal Holley
 Mr. Peter Castle
 Mr. Peter Macaulay
 Mr. Michael Higgins
 Mr. Anthony Bandle

OUR THANKS

JDR Family Trust
 Trinity Christian School
 UC College - Lake Ginninderra
 Qcity Transit

OUR SUPPORTERS

ACT Government
 AUSTRWIM
 Icon Water
 Viva Leisure and the Club Lime Group
 YMCA NSW

The passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II brings profound sadness to Royal Life Saving Society - Australia, our members and lifesavers across Australia.

We send our condolences to the Royal Family, and all our friends and colleagues across Britain and the Commonwealth, who feel her loss so deeply. We reflect with great admiration and eternal gratitude on her Patronage, and her deep commitment to our lifesaving mission.

From the joy of the Royal Life Saving Junior Respiration Award pinned proudly on her swimsuit at age 12, to her most recent presentation of honours to colleagues, and everything in between, her support has been deeply felt, much cherished and of great inspiration.

Rest In Peace.



Current Royal Life Saving Australia President Dr Mitch Hartman said “Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth’s leadership is an inspiration to lifesavers all over Australia, and across the Commonwealth. Her deep and personal commitment to swimming and lifesaving, and her interest in the Society’s work encouraged so many towards community service”.

Ms Pene Snashall, Royal Life Saving Australia President (2015-2018) and RLS Commonwealth Trustee, who traveled to Buckingham Palace and met Her Majesty for the Society’s 125-year anniversary in 2015, reflected on her conversation with Her Majesty about the importance of developing lifesaving skills among regional communities.

“In our short conversation I recall that Queen Elizabeth II speaking about the vast space that is Australia, and her understanding that being away from the coast didn’t eliminate the dangers of drowning or the importance of swimming and lifesaving skills. She was quietly spoken and incredibly welcoming,” said Ms Snashall.

Professor John Pearn AO, Royal Life Saving Medical Adviser and long-standing child drowning advocate, was awarded the King Edward VII Cup in 2015, the Society’s highest honour. Professor Pearn reflected on Her Majesty’s integrity and the example of her leadership and service.

“Queen Elizabeth has been a tremendous role model for so many, and in so many walks of life. Her sense of service to others – is a core principle that underlies all our work. My wife Vena recalls speaking with the Queen like two grandmothers, sharing stories about her deep love for family. We send our condolences to her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren,” said Professor Pearn.

› PLATINUM JUBILEE

Dr Mitch Hartman, President of Royal Life Saving Society – Australia and Pene Snashall Commonwealth Trustee, Royal Life Saving Society joined Royal Life Saving Australia Patron His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley at the Government House Platinum Jubilee Ball in celebration of Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.

The event was an excellent networking opportunity – heaps of fun, great food and more than 140 Australians who have worked for the betterment of their communities across multiple industries and organisations. Yes, it was cold – Canberra in June and we were outside in a marquee - but the conversation and friendship was warming!



OUR SUPPORTERS

Royal Life Saving Society Australia - ACT would like to thank the following organisations for their continued support.

ACT Government



Community Supporters



Design Partner



Technology Partner



Our Thanks

- > ACT Sport and Recreation
- > ACT Education
- > Icon Water
- > National Capital Authority

- > YMCA NSW, Stromlo Leisure Centre
- > YMCA NSW, Canberra Olympic Pool
- > YMCA NSW, Lakeside Leisure Centre
- > YMCA NSW, Gungahlin Leisure Centre
- > Viva Leisure, Canberra International Sports and Aquatic Centre
- > Next Gen
- > Manuka Swimming Pool
- > Dickson Aquatic Centre
- > Big Splash Water Park
- > Aqua Harmony Swim School
- > Aquatots Swim School

- > Woden School
- > St Bede's Primary School
- > St Joseph's Primary School
- > Palmerston School
- > Latham Primary School
- > Harrison School
- > Canberra Christian School
- > Trinity Christian School
- > St Francis Xavier College
- > Ochre Health
- > National Zoo and Aquarium
- > Fitness First, Deakin
- > Capital Chemist
- > Canberra Girls Grammar School
- > Brindabella Christian College
- > Burgmann Anglican College

> Community partnerships are about cross-sector alliance. Working together to fulfil an obligation and sharing the burden to bring about a benefit.



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call **02 6260 5800**

Email **act@royalact.com.au**

CONNECT WITH US



RoyalLifeSaving



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LifeSavingNSW



RoyalLifeSavingAust



DrowningPrevention.org.au