

LIFE SAVING VICTORIA
VICTORIAN DROWNING REPORT
2009/10



09



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SUGGESTED CITATION

Life Saving Victoria, (2010). Victorian Drowning Report 2009/2010, Life Saving Victoria, Melbourne.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Life Saving Victoria gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following organisations in preparing the Victorian Drowning Summary:

Aquatics & Recreation Victoria
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Emergency Services Policy & Support, Department of Justice
Marine Safety Victoria
Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner, Department of Justice
Royal Life Saving Society Australia
State Coroner's Office of Victoria
Surfing Victoria
Swimming Victoria
Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit
Yachting Victoria

SAVING LIVES, PREVENTING INJURIES, ENJOYING THE WATER

INTRODUCTION

Recent research has indicated that attendance at aquatic facilities and coastal areas is now greater than 150 million visitations per year. We also need to consider the number of times people use other aquatic environments such as backyard pools, dams, homes and other inland waterways. As a collective Victorian population, we are drawn to our aquatic environments; it is part of our cultural makeup.

While there are enormous benefits associated with this fascination, we need to be certain we have made every effort to lower the related drowning toll. In the past decade, 418 people have drowned in Victoria. There were 38 fatal drowning incidents in Victoria from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010. This is an increase of three drowning deaths compared to last year. At 0.69 per 100,000 of population, Victoria has one of the lowest drowning rates in the world, however we still have more to do, as just one drowning is one too many.

The increase in the drowning toll this year (up by 9%) demonstrates the importance of continuing the work of Life Saving Victoria, the State Government, other aquatic agencies and the general community to reduce the drowning toll. We need to work towards new goals and develop innovative approaches to reducing water-related incidents in our community.

This year's increase in the drowning toll is primarily driven by a rise in toddler drowning deaths. While toddlers represent six per cent of our population, this year they represented 18% of all drowning deaths. In addition, it is of concern that the number of non-fatal drowning incidents (admissions to hospital for non-fatal drowning) continues at a rate of eight to one.

This report provides a record of current and proposed strategies for continuing to lower the trend line of Victoria's drowning toll. The proposed strategies will be implemented as funds and other resources become available.

Finally, it is important to again note that in addressing the issue of drowning in Victoria, we cannot achieve success with one single strategy, nor equally no 'one' agency can singlehandedly continue to bring down the drowning toll. Together, we have shown that we can make a difference. We welcome your perusal and interest.

Nigel Taylor ESM

Chief Executive Officer
Life Saving Victoria



THE INCREASE IN THE DROWNING TOLL THIS YEAR (UP BY 9%) DEMONSTRATES THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING THE WORK OF LIFE SAVING VICTORIA, THE STATE GOVERNMENT, OTHER AQUATIC AGENCIES AND THE GENERAL COMMUNITY TO REDUCE THE DROWNING TOLL

OUR ENVIRONMENT

Making popular water destinations safe is a major challenge when considering the complexity of the aquatic environment and its popularity. The following statistics provide for an indication of its scope and size:

- In 2008/09, 73 million people visited Victoria's bays, while 33 million enjoyed the popular coastal beaches. (ref: *Parks Victoria's Parks Visitation Monitor 2008/2009 undertaken by Newspoll market research*)
- Of the 1,230km of Victorian coastline, there are 588 ocean beaches, which make up 811km or 66%. There are 146 beaches along the 259km coastline of Port Phillip Bay. (ref: *Short, A. (1996). Beaches of the Victorian Coast & Port Phillip Bay; A guide to their nature, characteristics, surf and safety. Sydney: University of NSW.*)
- In Port Phillip Bay alone, there has been an average annual increase of 4% in visitations between 2001-2009. (ref: *Parks Victoria's Parks Visitation Monitor 2008/2009 undertaken by Newspoll market research*)
- Victorian lifesavers perform over 750 rescues and resuscitations each year and conduct up to 50,000 preventative actions and assists. (ref: *Life Saving Victoria*)
- Approximately 25,000 Life Saving Victoria (LSV) volunteers, drawn from a base of 57 patrolling clubs and supported by 110 professional lifeguards, are responsible for patrolling 66 beaches across Victoria. (ref: *Life Saving Victoria*)
- There are an estimated 128,000 backyard swimming pools in Victoria. (ref: *ABS - March 2007*)
- There are more than 500 public and private swimming pools throughout the state, 60% rural/regional and 40% metropolitan, attracting 41 million visitations each year. (ref: *Aquatics & Recreation Victoria*)
- There are over 160,000 registered powered recreational boats in Victoria. There are around 300,000 licensed recreational boaters and personal watercraft (PWC) operators in Victoria. (ref: *Transport Safety Victoria*)
- Around 100 yacht clubs collectively have 12,000 individual active members across Victoria. (ref: *Yachting Victoria*)
- There are also approximately 10,000 passive watercraft users in Victoria e.g. kite surfers, canoeists, kayakers and windsurfers. (ref: *Transport Safety Victoria*)
- In 2008-2009, it was estimated that 721,000 Victorians were involved in recreational fishing activities, with an estimated 8.7 million trips per year. (ref: *Cochrane David. (2009) Economic Study of Recreational Fishing in Victoria, Melbourne: Ernst & Young*)
- On average Life Saving Victoria, it's licencees and service members deliver water safety education to almost 127,000 participants.

MAKING POPULAR WATER DESTINATIONS SAFE IS A MAJOR CHALLENGE WHEN CONSIDERING THE COMPLEXITY OF THE AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT AND ITS POPULARITY



RIP

LIFESAVERS PERFORM OVER 750 RESCUES AND RESUSCITATIONS EACH YEAR

WHO IS DROWNING?

GENDER

Males remain three times more likely to drown than females. This year, 29 (76%) males and nine (24%) females drowned in Victoria. The rate of drowning deaths was also calculated per 100,000 of population of males and females (Figure 1).

Results show that the rate of drowning in males has declined by 18% compared to the average over the last 10 years (2000-2010) and the female drowning rate has declined by 13% over the same period.

AGE

Infants and toddlers remain the most at risk group of drowning of any other age group in our community. This year, seven children aged 0-4 years drowned - an increase of four compared with last year. In addition, three children aged 5-14 years drowned - an increase of one compared with last year. On a positive note, we are seeing the potential effects of work to reduce the number of drowning deaths in young male 'risk takers', with reductions in the 15-24 and 25-34 year age groups. Three young adults aged 15-24 years drowned this year - a decrease of one compared to last year. Also, three adults aged 25-34 years drowned during the same time - a decrease of five compared to last year.

Drowning in adults aged 35-59 years increased by five this year, compared to last year with 16 drowning deaths. However, this is similar to previous years with an average of 15 drowning deaths per year in this group over the last 10 years. The number of older adult drowning deaths remained the same as last year, with a total of six drowning deaths. This is a decrease compared to previous years, with an average of nine drowning deaths per year over the last decade in older adults.

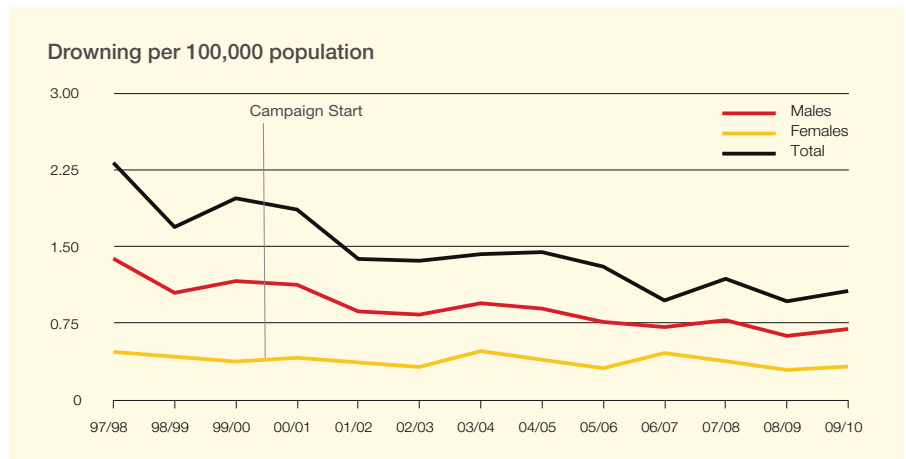


Figure 1: Rate of drowning deaths by gender in Victoria just prior to and following 12 years of the PISBTW campaign.

INFANTS AND TODDLERS

While much work has been done over previous years to dramatically reduce the toddler drowning rate by more than half, there was a significant increase in toddler drowning deaths this year.

Seven toddlers drowned in Victoria this year, which is four more than last year and three more than the average over the past 10 years (2000-2010). While children aged 0-4 years make up six percent of the Victorian population, this year they represented 18% of all drowning deaths.

The locations where these incidents occur are typically around the home environment.

This year, three drowning deaths occurred in a home pool or spa, two in bathtubs, one in a bucket and one in a creek on a farm.

Toddlers are very inquisitive and want to explore their surroundings. It only takes a few seconds when a parent or carer is distracted for a drowning to occur. In the majority of cases in this age group, the child wandered into the water while their parent or carer was distracted.

Also, there were reportedly no barriers around either the water or between the child's play area and the water, or there was a faulty lock on the barrier that was present.

**ON A POSITIVE NOTE,
WE ARE SEEING
THE POTENTIAL
EFFECTS OF WORK
TO REDUCE THE
NUMBER OF DROWNING
DEATHS IN YOUNG
MALE 'RISK TAKERS'**



THIS YEAR 38 VICTORIANS DROWNED – 29 (76%) MALES AND NINE (24%) FEMALES

EXAMPLES OF EXISTING PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Keep Watch

A Royal Life Saving Society - Australia (RLSSA) public education program aimed at preventing children from drowning.

Watch Around Water

A public education program developed to encourage parents/guardians to take responsibility for adequately supervising their children while visiting public aquatic facilities.

Swim and Survive

A child-focussed program designed specifically for children 6-36 months that aims to develop water familiarisation, exploration and water safety skills.

Junior Development Program (Nippers)

The junior development program is designed to ensure children from the ages of 5 to 12 have fun at the beach, while participating in lessons that will lead them to becoming a lifesaver.

Volunteer Lifesavers

Provision of lifesaving and support services both at patrolled beaches and beyond the flags.

Surfing Victoria

Introduction of a social media campaign targeting male risk takers in addition to the surfing for boys program.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- Promote the development of a national campaign highlighting the need for child-safety zones on rural properties and outlining the importance of parental supervision and knowledge of rescue and resuscitation skills.
- Expand the promotion of swimming pool and spa safety to all organisations and individuals directly linked to the care of infants and young children.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions targeting parental or carer supervision of children in water-related environments.
- Provide advice to local councils, committees of management, and other relevant responsible authorities on funding submissions to government for essential maintenance or enhancement works to ageing regional community aquatic infrastructure, to promote continued access to local water-based opportunities.
- Conduct research into non-fatal drowning incidents to assess the prevalence and impact on the community.

THE DISTURBING TREND OF NON-FATAL DROWNING IN INFANTS AND TODDLERS 0-4 YEARS OLD CONTINUES WITH SEVEN NON-FATAL DROWNING INCIDENTS FOR EVERY ONE DROWNING DEATH EACH YEAR



SEVEN CHILDREN AGED 0-4 YEARS DROWNED - AN INCREASE OF FOUR FROM 2008/09

PEOPLE FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES (CALD)

Limited information is available to determine the full extent of drowning in people from CALD communities. However, anecdotal evidence from the media and communities, combined with evidence from Victoria Police and the State Coroner's Office, indicates that 13% of drowning deaths in Victoria from 2007-2010 involved people from CALD communities. This is in line with national figures suggesting that 15% of drowning deaths in Australia involve people from CALD communities.

This emphasises the need to expand the education of people new to Australia, as well as those with little or no experience of Australian aquatic environments.

NATIONAL FIGURES SUGGEST THAT 15% OF DROWNING DEATHS IN AUSTRALIA INVOLVE PEOPLE FROM CALD COMMUNITIES

EXAMPLES OF EXISTING PREVENTION STRATEGIES

CALD Beach Programs

A tailored program designed to encompass beach safety and awareness including learning lifesaving and rescue skills.

Accredited Training Courses

Aquatic-based courses such as first aid and pool lifeguard awards designed to up-skill individuals and provide mentors within CALD communities.

Swim and Survive Active

A broad, balanced program designed to teach a range of skills and knowledge to develop swimming, water safety, survival and basic rescue skills to newly arrived communities.

CALD Meet a Lifeguard

An interactive program designed to educate participants about potential aquatic hazards and water safety messages in various aquatic venues.

Resuscitate a Mate

A hands-on program designed to cover potential emergency situations and scenarios giving participants basic first aid and resuscitation skills and knowledge to newly arrived communities.

Partnerships

Life Saving Victoria has partnered with Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) and a number of airlines to launch a national in-flight advertising campaign to increase surf safety awareness, targeted at tourists and new arrivals to Australia.

Indigenous Surfing Program

Surfing Victoria's Victorian Indigenous Surfing Program is a state-wide program that exposes and creates opportunities for young indigenous people to develop water safety skills and discover the sport of surfboard and bodyboard riding.

Signage

Implementation and promotion of a consistent system of signage using relevant international symbols for information, warnings and emergency markers for high-risk waterways.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- Develop information and resources, in conjunction with RLSSA and SLSA, for international, interstate and intrastate tourists.
- Use existing channels to assist newly arrived refugees assimilate into the broader community.
- Develop pathways for the continual provision of formal water safety education, training and emergency response, in particular targeting multicultural and indigenous communities.
- Provide key design and operational advice for public water-related and recreation facilities to encourage diversity of use and increased participation.
- Use international and local data to establish a learn-to-swim program and baseline of swimming capabilities to assist future water safety skill development programs for newly-arrived communities.
- Increase reach to multicultural and indigenous communities regarding toddler supervision in water-related environments.



13%

13% OF DROWNING DEATHS INVOLVED PEOPLE FROM CALD COMMUNITIES

WHEN, WHERE AND WHAT

WHEN DID THEY DROWN?

Season

Drowning incidents occur all year round, but typically the majority occur in summer. In more recent years, Victoria has seen a downward trend in the number of incidents occurring in summer. However this year, possibly due to warmer weather conditions, there was a jump in the number of drowning deaths in summer with 16 people (42%) drowning compared with nine (26%) the previous year.

As is typical of previous years, there were 10 (26%) drowning deaths in spring, and nine (24%) in autumn. There was a reduction in drowning deaths in winter this year with three (8%) compared with 10 (29%) the previous year.

Day of the week

Almost one third (11, 29%) of drowning deaths occurred on Saturday this year, with the remainder occurring mainly at the start of the week, (22, 58% from Monday to Wednesday). Over previous years, most deaths have occurred on weekends, averaging 16 drowning deaths across Saturdays and Sundays (38%) with the remainder spread throughout the week (10, 15% from Monday to Friday).

DROWNING INCIDENTS OCCUR ALL YEAR ROUND, BUT TYPICALLY THE MAJORITY OCCUR IN SUMMER

EXAMPLES OF EXISTING PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Life Saving Services

Life Saving Victoria, through its role as part of the emergency services, is further contributing to the Victorian community through a more flexible delivery of their patrolling service. Fifty-seven clubs patrolled 66 sites throughout Victoria with additional support provided by paid lifeguards. These essential services were supported by a single engine Bell helicopter based at Moorabbin.

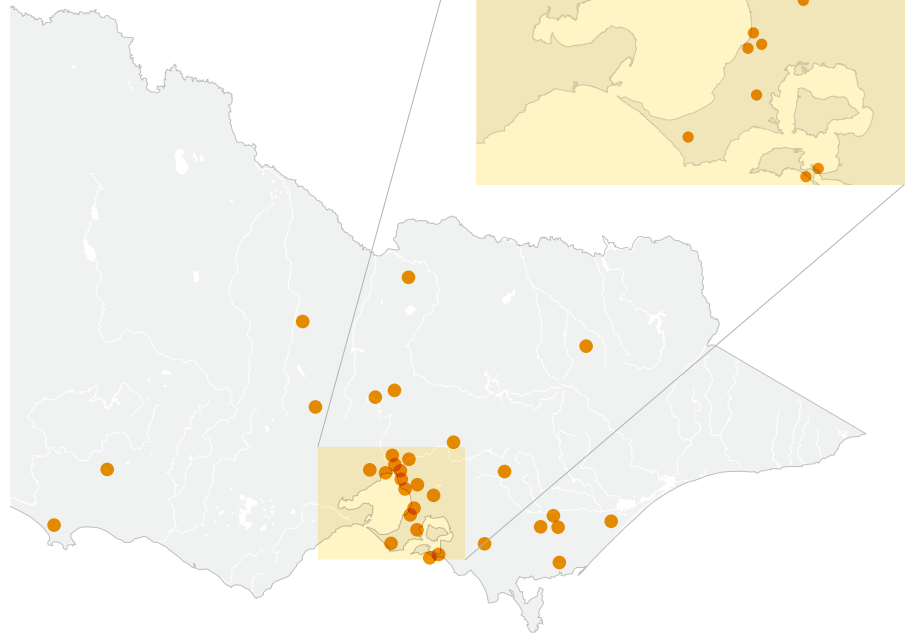
Membership Development, Growth and Support

LSV continues to focus on the recruitment, training, development and retention of its 25,000 plus members that allow it to continue to deliver these essential services. This is achieved through its Junior Development Program right through to sporting opportunities.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- Start patrolling services at Port Philip Bay Clubs' two weeks earlier and continue through to ANZAC Day to cater for changing beach user patterns.
- Operate a Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) from Pier 35 in Port Melbourne to enable evening patrols and major event coverage. Operate two single engine helicopter services from two locations to increase LSV's flexible service capability.
- Introduce new technologies to better illustrate changes to water-related risk scenarios to enable greater levels of information sharing across agencies.
- Evaluate and recommend enhancements to standards for the delivery of Victorian water-related industry educational programs.
- Investigate and develop training programs to respond to significant influential social and environmental changes that are impacting on water safety.
- Ongoing review of all volunteer rescue services to ensure the long-term sustainability of volunteer service delivery.
- Foster greater links and recognition of drowning prevention with climate change disaster mitigation programs.
- Monitor water-related activity trends to ensure that waterway zoning reflects usage.
- Research and report on the role and effectiveness of policies, legislation and standards in relation to water safety.
- Regulate for periodical auditing of safety standards of public pools.

Drowning incidents 2009/2010



WHERE DID THEY DROWN

Region

Just over half of the drowning deaths this year occurred in metropolitan areas (20, 53%) compared with regional areas. In addition, approximately two-thirds of those people who drowned resided in metropolitan areas (26, 68%).

Waterways

Drowning deaths along our coastline and inland waterways decreased this year, while drowning in the home environment increased. This is most likely due to the increase in toddler drowning deaths which typically occur in the home.

There were 14 (37%) coastal drowning deaths this year, compared with an average of 17 (39%) per year over the past 10 years. A more dramatic decrease occurred in inland drowning with eight (21%) fatalities this year compared to 15 (36%) per year over the last 10 years. The increase in drowning in the home environment is of concern with 16 (42%) drowning deaths, compared with an average of 10 (24%) per year over the past 10 years.

Within the home environment, seven drowning deaths occurred in home pools or a spa or inflatable pool; six occurred in bath tubs, and the other locations were in a bucket and on a farm in a creek.

EXAMPLES OF EXISTING PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Play It Safe by the Water

This campaign provides for a number of water safety programs targeting an equal level of activity between regional and metropolitan Victoria.

Rural Programs

Life Saving Victoria staff travel across the state year round to deliver water safety and other lifesaving programs to regional schools.

Open Water Learning Experience

Life Saving Victoria delivers a fun and educational program called Open water Learning Experience to students in their local open water environment to emphasise water safety, resuscitation skills and to identify potential aquatic hazards.

Telstra Beach to Bush

An interactive program designed to take the beach to the bush and teach regional primary school students key water safety messages and to understand potential beach hazards and the role of a lifesaver.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- Establish a working party of industry experts to address the issue of backyard pool drowning and injury prevention.
- Provide support for continued water safety information at major access points to aquatic environments.
- Work with local and state government to introduce regular inspections of home pool fencing.
- Inspect clubhouses to identify building improvements and modifications that reflect their changing nature as community hubs and assist in sustaining long-term volunteer service and support.
- Work with local government and insurers to introduce an accreditation system to act as a risk management tool for water-related recreation centres.

WHAT WERE THEY DOING

Activity

Walking or playing near water, swimming, paddling or wading in water and boating are the three activity types that have typically represented the greatest proportion of drowning deaths. Reduced numbers of boating deaths and in those walking or recreating near water were again recorded in Victoria this year. However caution must be taken with these figures as in almost a quarter of cases (9, 24%) the activity prior to the incident occurring is unknown.

This year, there was an increase in rock fishing incidents with three rock fishing drowning deaths. Prior to this there had been no rock fishing drowning deaths in the previous three years. The other type of activity where there was an increase this year was in the number of cases where the person was bathing, with seven (18%) drowning deaths this year compared with an average of four (10%) per year over the last 10 years. These incidents typically involved either young children or adult females. In the case of adult drowning while bathing, secondary factors such as epilepsy and other pre-existing medical conditions are involved.

EXAMPLES OF EXISTING PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Fishing Education

VRFish in conjunction with Life Saving Victoria are delivering fishing safety workshops to CALD communities in regard to safe fishing practices, as well as the necessity to wear life jackets when rock fishing.

Boating Zones

Parks Victoria as a waterway manager have implemented appropriate legislation to further strengthen the delineation of activity zones in areas of high usage and diverse recreational water-related activities.

Marine Safety

Transport Safety Victoria run information sessions and produce publications promoting the safe use of water craft such as kite boards, power boats, jet skis, kayaks and wakeboards.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- Implement a water safety public awareness campaign targeting high-risk recreational activities.
- Specifically target education of older males about the dangers of boating/fishing alone.
- Conduct a gap analysis of high-risk activities to identify the need for appropriate training of facilitators and participants.
- Explore the development of a certified training program for high-risk recreational activities to address any identified safety needs.
- Encourage all personnel involved in watercraft-related supervision, training or education to hold recognised qualifications in boating, beyond a basic boat licence.
- Promote the development of a national campaign highlighting the need for child-safety zones on rural properties and outlining the importance of parental supervision and knowledge of rescue and resuscitation skills.
- Reduce response times through the placement of a rapid response RWC (Jetski) in the Punchbowl area near Philip Island. To continue working to reduce drownings in the area, a popular rock fishing location.
- Improve emergency response times through the placement of emergency beacons at the Punchbowl. These beacons will allow rock fishermen to alert emergency services with the push of a button. Live web cameras will be installed to assist in ongoing monitoring of usage trends and assist in responding to incidents.

THERE WAS AN INCREASE THIS YEAR IN THE NUMBER OF CASES WHERE THE PERSON WAS BATHING, WITH SEVEN (18%) DROWNING DEATHS COMPARED WITH AN AVERAGE OF FOUR (10%) PER YEAR OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS



ROCK FISHING INCIDENTS INCREASED WITH THREE DROWNING DEATHS

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

ALCOHOL INTOXICATION

Alcohol is often associated with drowning deaths and increases the likelihood of immersion resulting in drowning when recreating around water.

Alcohol has contributed to an average of eight (19%) drowning deaths per year from 2000-2010 and contributed to almost a quarter (24%) of drowning deaths in adults aged 15-59 years. Males typically contribute to the majority of cases (82%).

Most of the incidents in 2009/10 involving alcohol also involved those swimming. However, the consumption of alcohol when involved in aquatic activities including boating, or when near water is of continuing concern, particularly in adult males aged 35-59 years.

PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES (PFDs)

Not wearing a life jacket has also been cited as a contributing factor in many drowning deaths, particularly relating to recreational boating activities.

Of all drowning deaths involving recreational boating or other activities where a PFD is required or recommended to be worn, such as rock fishing, 79% (61) of victims from 2000-2010 were reportedly not wearing a PFD.

Many incidents involved unexpected large waves leaving insufficient time for the victim to put on a PFD. This emphasises the importance of always wearing a PFD when boating or rock fishing.

EXAMPLES OF EXISTING PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Don't Drink and Drown Campaign

Life Saving Victoria has been promoting the 'Don't Drink And Drown' message across all media and PR channels during a public awareness campaign blitz on key dates such as Schoolies Week, Christmas, New Year's and Australia Day.

Schoolies

Provide ongoing professional lifeguard services at key beaches during 'Schoolies Week'.

Points of Entry

Parks Victoria provide appropriate local signage with regard to local boating risks at boating disembarkment points such as boat ramps.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- Investigate the provision of paid lifeguard services at new high-risk sites.
- Liaise with alcohol regulators regarding the responsible serving of alcohol in water-related environments.
- Conduct research into the effects of legal and illegal drugs in relation to water-related accidents and drowning.
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships with appropriate agencies to ensure the delivery of safety broadcasts to the entire boating public.

ALCOHOL HAS CONTRIBUTED TO AN AVERAGE OF EIGHT (19%) DROWNING DEATHS PER YEAR FROM 2000-2010



ALSO

ALCOHOL CONTRIBUTED TO 24% OF DROWNING DEATHS IN ADULTS AGED 15-59 YEARS

IMPACT

In the past decade, 418 people have drowned in Victoria.

There were 38 drowning deaths in Victoria from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010. This is an increase of three drowning deaths compared to last year.

Accounting for population growth, the crude unintentional drowning rate was 0.69 per 100,000 of population in 2009/10 (Figure 1, page 4). This is an increase in the drowning rate of 11% compared to last year. However, this figure also represents a decrease in the drowning rate by 39% over the last 10 years (2000-2010). This also represents a halving of the drowning rate since the start of the 'Play it Safe by the Water' campaign.

Evidence suggests that the drowning prevention and education initiatives of Life Saving Victoria, in conjunction with other key water safety organisations and agencies, have had a positive influence on reducing the drowning rate, saving many lives in Victoria.

SOCIAL COST OF DROWNING

Accidental drowning deaths and non-fatal accidental drowning incidents place a tremendous burden on society both from a human and economic perspective.

In human terms, this translates to a loss of life, lost quality of life, pain and suffering. There are also the direct costs to society associated with treatment and ongoing care, along with lost productivity due to death or incapacity.

A report by The Allen Consulting Group in 2005 titled 'Valuing an Australian Icon' found that the estimated value of a life is \$1.7 million. Therefore the estimated direct cost of drowning deaths in Victoria in 2009/2010 is \$65 million.

NON-FATAL DROWNING

From 2000-2009, there were 844 people treated in Victorian hospital emergency departments, of which 639 were admitted to hospital or required more specialist care. Thus for every one person that dies from drowning, another two require hospital treatment for a non-fatal drowning incident.

Of greater concern with non-fatal incidents are the potential long-term effects including severe traumatisation, brain damage and permanent disability.

EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT THE DROWNING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION INITIATIVES OF LIFE SAVING VICTORIA, IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER KEY WATER SAFETY ORGANISATIONS AND AGENCIES, HAVE HAD A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON REDUCING THE DROWNING RATE, SAVING MANY LIVES IN VICTORIA

NON GOVERNMENT PARTNERED ORGANISATIONS - AQUATIC

LIFE SAVING VICTORIA

Life Saving Victoria's mission is to prevent aquatic-related death and injury in all Victorian communities. Its vision is that all Victorians will learn water safety, swimming and resuscitation, and be provided with safe aquatic environments and venues.

SURFING VICTORIA

Surfing Victoria is recognised by the State Government and surf industry as the organising body for surfing in Victoria. The Surfing Victoria mission is to foster and develop members at all levels through Surfing Victoria competitions, programs, major events, affiliated surf schools and boardrider clubs.

AQUATICS AND RECREATION VICTORIA

Aquatics and Recreation Victoria (ARV) is Victoria's peak industry body for aquatics and recreation. The organisation revolves around two major functions, the provision of services to the industry and aquatic and recreation services. These key elements of the business are supported by internal corporate services and business and marketing departments.

SWIMMING VICTORIA

Swimming Victoria Inc (SVI) was established in 1893 and is the peak body for competitive swimming in the state. SVI promotes swimming as a healthy lifestyle choice and encourages swimming at all levels by supporting and guiding members to enjoy their sport and maximise their potential.

YACHTING VICTORIA

Yachting Victoria was established to promote and encourage participation in sailing and boating. It is the peak body for sailing and boating in the state, representing clubs, class associations and its members involved in competitive sailing and recreational boating.

METHODS

This report includes unintentional drowning incidents only. It does not include deaths due to natural causes, suicide, or homicide. Information for the report has been collected from the State Coroner's Office of Victoria and the National Coroners Information System (NCIS). This information relates to both open and closed cases. While all care is taken to ensure that the results are as accurate as possible, these figures are provisional only and the report contains drowning deaths known as at 2 August 2010. Coronial investigations and findings relating to open cases may alter the reported drowning figures.

Detailed information on the incidence of drowning deaths in Victoria from July 2000 to June 2010 has been used to provide a 10-year average of drowning deaths in Victoria. This is used throughout the current report to compare with drowning deaths that occurred this year (2009/10).



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