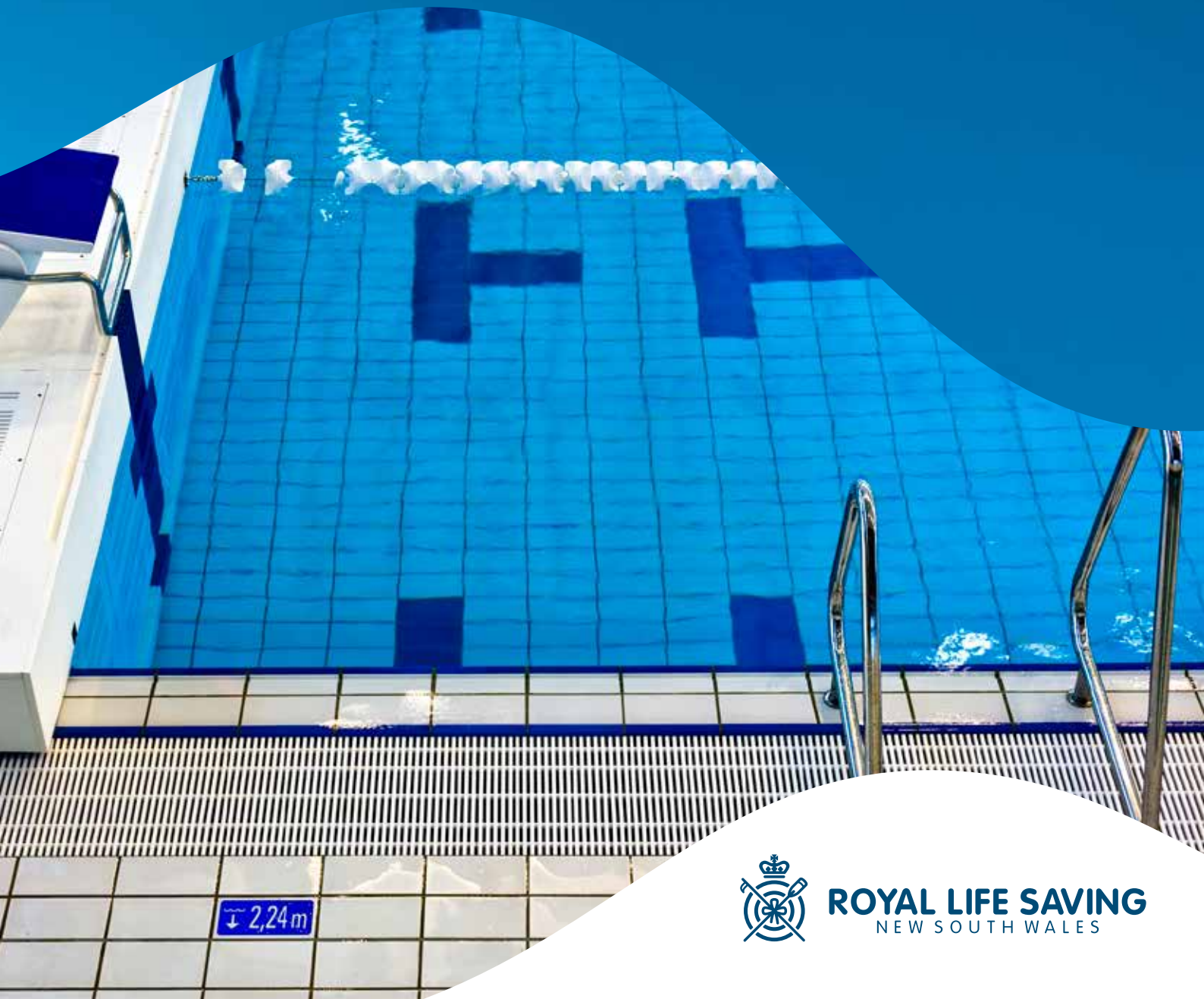


New South Wales State of the Industry Report

1st July 2020 – 30th June 2021



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



> ABOUT ROYAL LIFE SAVING NSW

Royal Life Saving NSW (RLS NSW) is the leader in drowning prevention and water safety education in the state. Since its inception in 1894, RLS NSW has worked to harness the strengths of communities to reduce drowning and aquatic related injuries in, on and around water. This has been achieved with the commitment and drive of four pillars:

1. Innovative, reliable, evidence-based health promotion and advocacy;
2. Strong and effective partnerships;
3. Quality programs, products and services;
4. Continuing as a committed national organisation.

For the Aquatics Industry, RLS NSW is the state's principal organisation in vocational training and aquatic risk management.

RLS NSW is committed to supporting aquatic facilities and organisations in the development of risk management strategies and aims to mitigate aquatic related incidents and accidents by providing recommendations around best practice for both employee and public safety in and around aquatic environments. The formulation and introduction of a risk management service can provide any aquatic venue or facility with the foundations for a successful and continued operation.

Acknowledgements

RLS NSW would like to thank and acknowledge the NSW aquatic sector for their commitment to the Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment (AFSA) process and for their multi-disciplined approach towards aquatic safety year after year.

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INTRODUCTION

RLSNSW is proud to present the 2020-21 – State of the Industry Report.

Each year aquatic facilities throughout NSW make a significant contribution to the health, wellbeing, and aquatic proficiencies of individuals within their communities. Aquatic facilities are valuable assets and provide users with recreational and social hubs, particularly during warmer months.

Staff employed within these facilities are committed and dedicated and constantly strive to ensure risks associated with operation are minimised and periodically assessed against industry best practice guidelines.

In partnership with Councils and management agencies who operate aquatic facilities, RLSNSW works collaboratively to identify and address best-practice standards, systems, and processes to ensure experiences within these facilities remain safe and enjoyable. RLSNSW would like to congratulate those facilities that participate in the AFSA program and continue to lead the way in aquatic safety and risk minimisation.

The RLSNSW State of the Industry Report showcases the current safety and compliance outcomes for aquatic facilities in NSW. This report aims to better understand the NSW aquatic industry as a collective by analysing and evaluating the risks to patron safety and highlighting areas that need improvement and development.

RLSNSW strives to create a greater understanding of the Industry and will continue to encourage further collaboration across NSW to ensure our facilities maintain the highest level of compliance.

IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the aquatic and recreation industry over the past 17 months.

The increased periods of lockdowns across the state have seen many frontline workers in the aquatic industry, almost half of whom are casual employees, lose their jobs or have significant interruption to their employment status. In particular, the loss of quality swim teachers is of concern and has direct consequences on program outcomes and participant benchmark achievements.

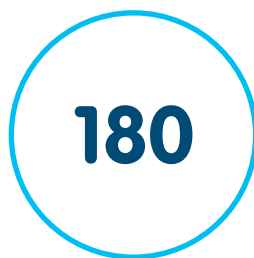
Furthermore, COVID-19 has had a significant social impact on swimming and water safety, with swimming lessons reportedly dropping 25% from the previous year. This places a significant burden on NSW and indeed Australia as a nation, to ensure COVID-19 does not result in a generation of non-swimmers.

The extensive lockdowns and Public Health Orders over 2020-21 had a significant impact on the delivery of AFSA's across NSW, with assessment numbers dropping 40% since the start of the pandemic. RLSNSW commends the NSW aquatic venues that have participated in AFSA's since the pandemic started. Their participation demonstrates a strong commitment to aquatic safety.

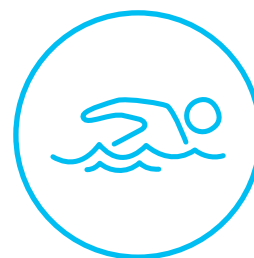
> 2020-21 Overview



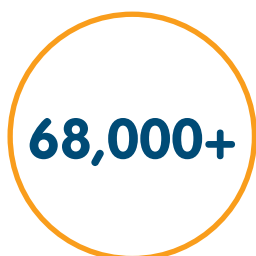
Keep Watch @ Public
Pool partners



Aquatic Risk
Services completed



200+ Public Pool
training locations



**Vocational
Accreditations**
40,000+ in regional NSW



250,000+ participants
in a Royal Life Saving
program or service



Industry employees
completed cultural
competence online program



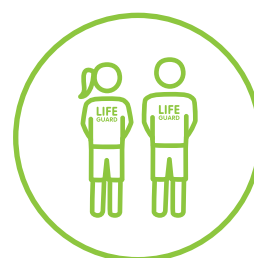
1500+ children
in Swim and Survive
Vacation program-regional remote



**5 Star
Water Safety Partners**



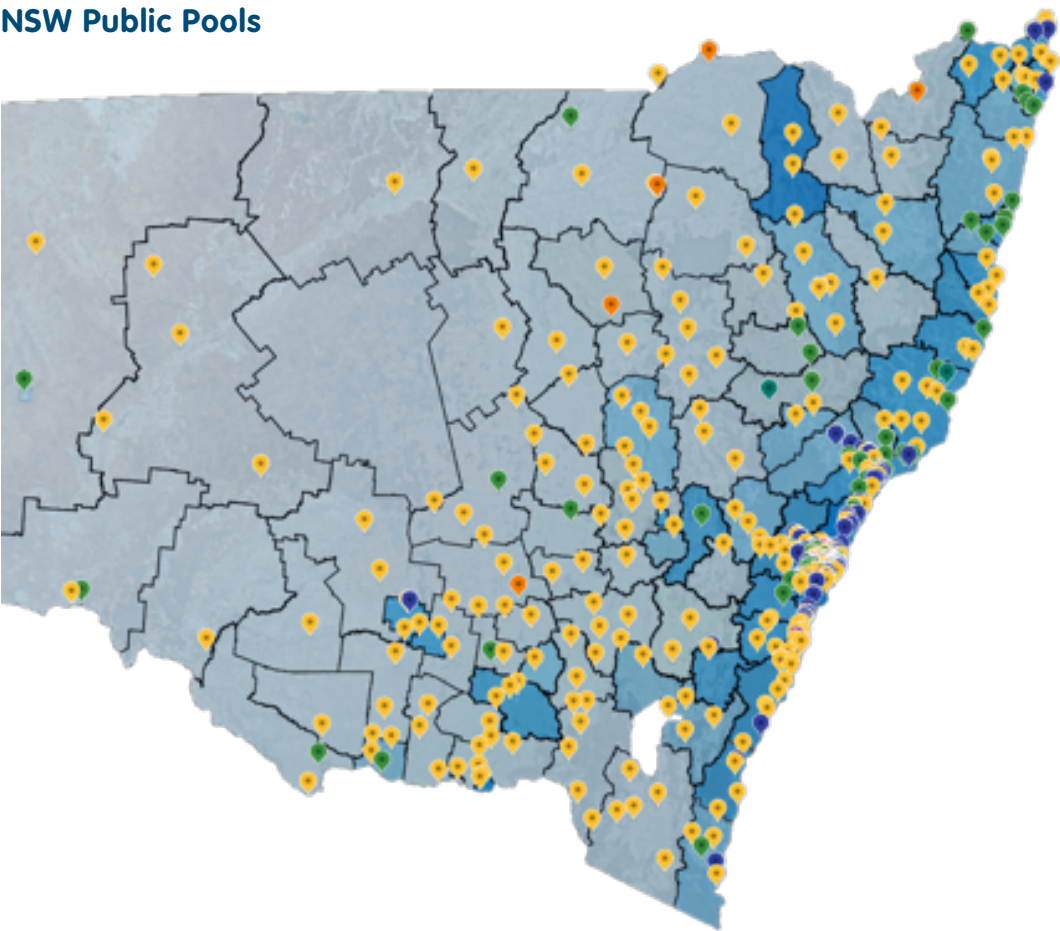
New Swim Teachers
trained



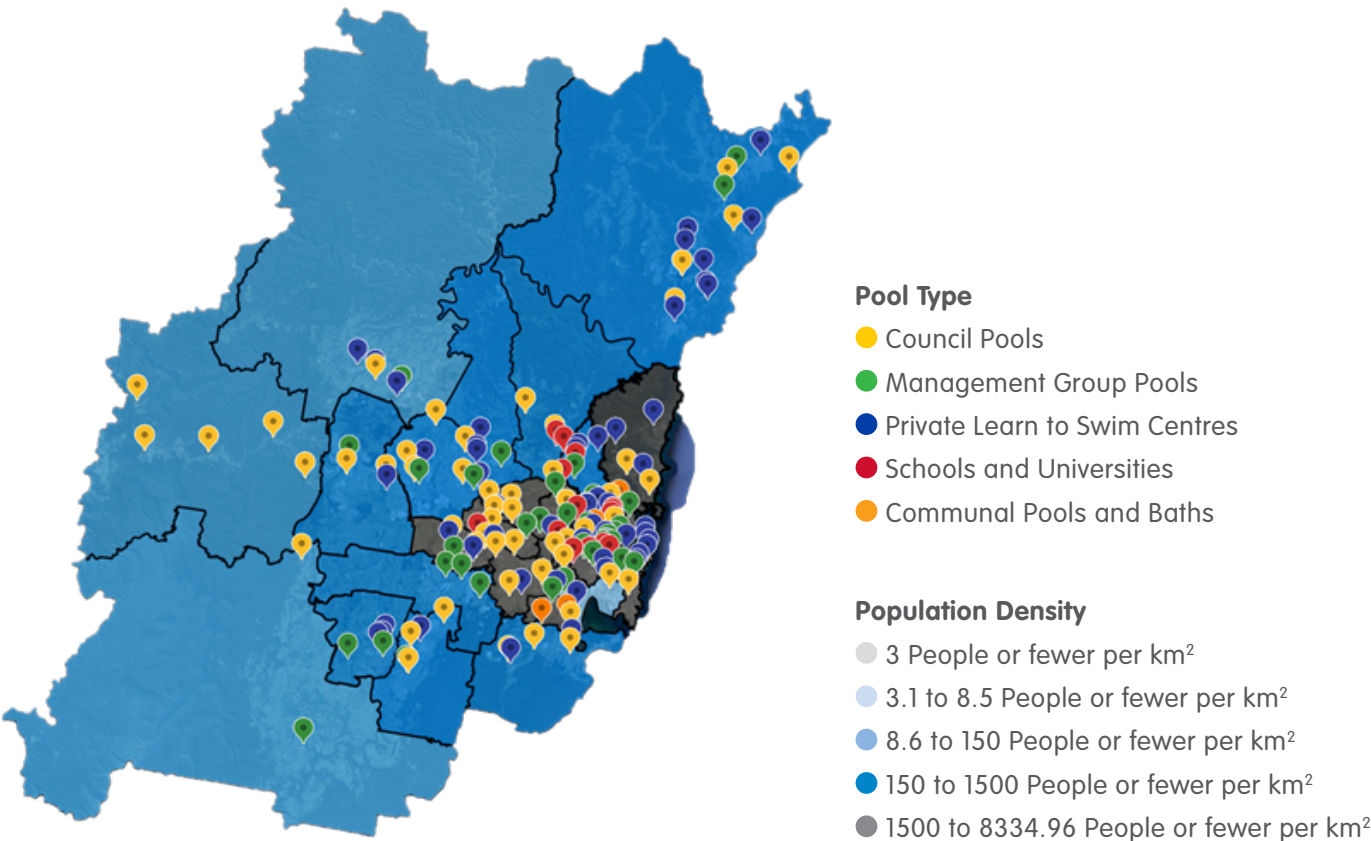
5000+ Pool Lifeguards
accredited across NSW

DISTRIBUTION OF NSW PUBLIC POOLS

NSW Public Pools



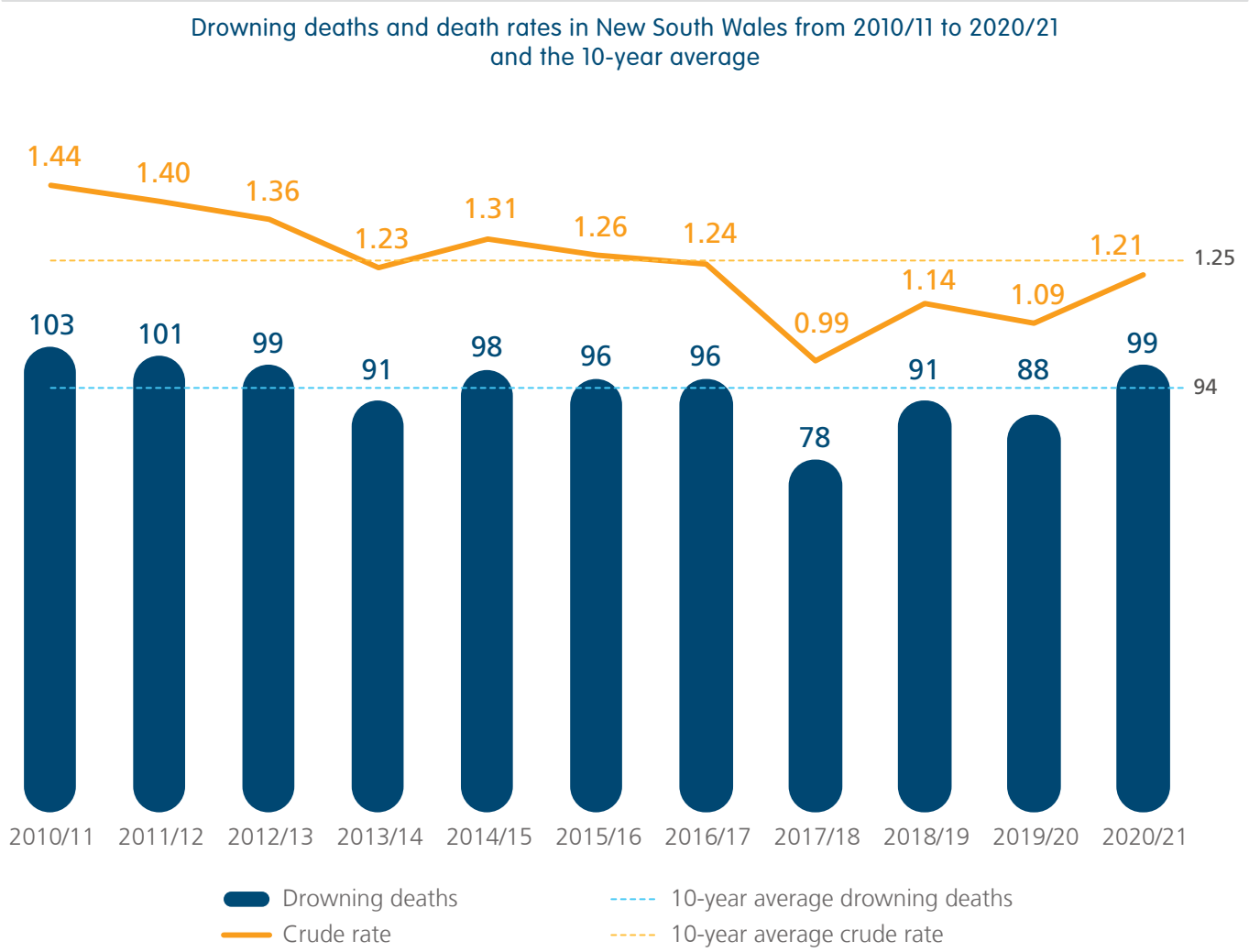
Greater Sydney



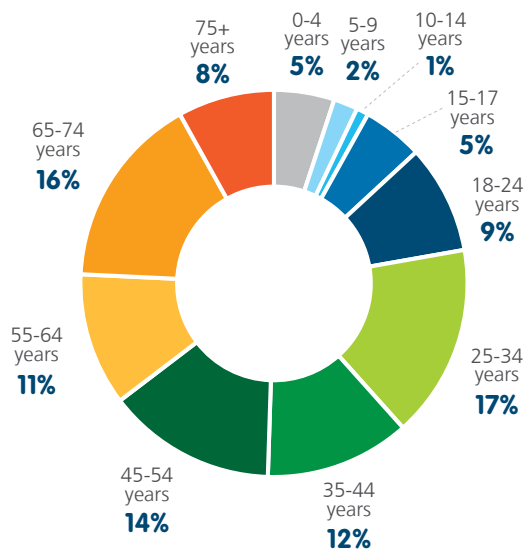


NSW FATAL DROWNING REPORT

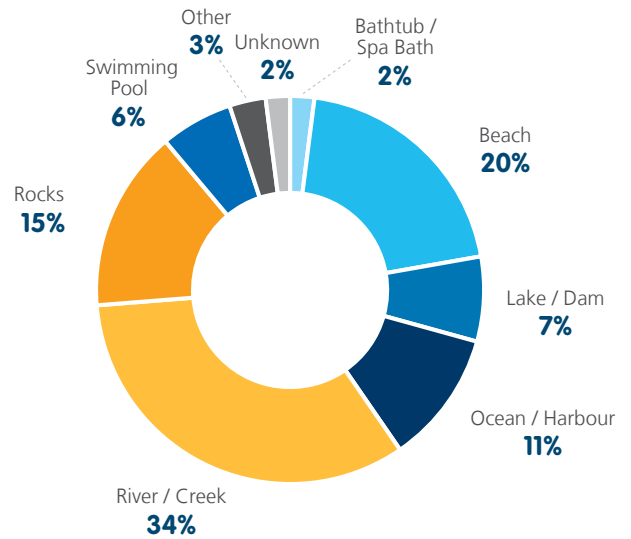
Fatal Drownings New South Wales 2020-21



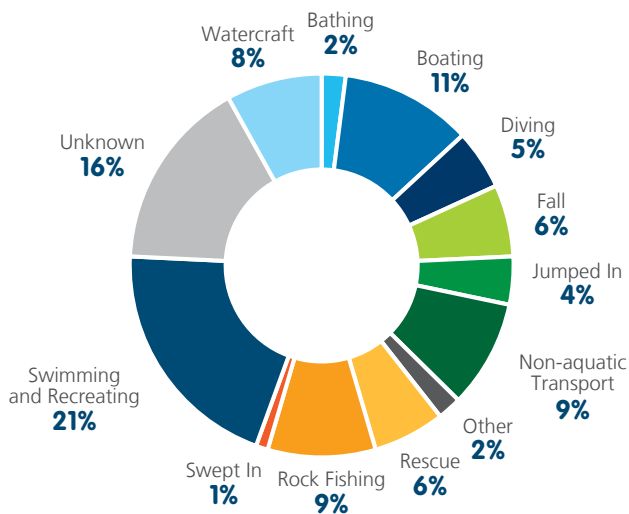
Age



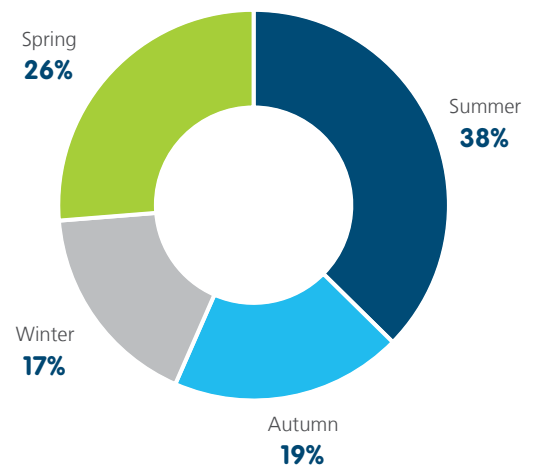
Location



Activity



Season



DROWNING ACROSS THE WORLD

- Drowning is the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury death worldwide, accounting for 7% of all injury-related deaths.
- There are an estimated 236 000 annual drowning deaths worldwide.
- Global estimates may significantly underestimate the actual public health problem related to drowning.
- Children, males and individuals with increased access to water are most at risk of drowning.

More than 90% of drowning deaths occur in rivers, lakes, wells and domestic water storage vessels in low- and middle-income countries. Half of all drowning deaths are in the Western Pacific and South-East Asia regions. Rates of drowning deaths per 100 000 population are highest, however, in the Western Pacific region followed by the African region.



› Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations

During 2020-21 the Guideline for Safe Pool Operations (GSPO) online portal underwent a major upgrade, with the aim to make the guidelines more user-friendly and to ensure it is easy to find critical information within the guidelines.

Under a variety of legal standards and frameworks, facility designers, owners and operators are charged with the responsibility of ensuring public and worker health and safety arising from the business and/or undertaking of aquatic facilities and their activities. For 30 years, Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSSA) has written the GSPO, which compiles and contextualises these standards and frameworks, making them easier to understand and apply to aquatic facilities.

This latest iteration, although not a change to the content of the guidelines, will make accessing key information easier than ever. It will allow users to search the guidelines based on keywords to find references to requirements from across multiple guidelines.

Throughout 2020-21, the National Aquatic Industry Safety Committee (NAISC) and RLSSA frequently met to apply extensions to pool lifeguard, swim teacher and aquatic program instructor licenses and re-accreditations and discuss the ongoing needs of the aquatic industry during the pandemic. The ongoing commitment by the NAISC and RLSSA resulted in publishing updated Guidelines for Managing the Risk of Covid-19 in Aquatic Facilities.

For more information

www.royallifesaving.com.au/Aquatic-Risk-and-Guidelines/guidelines/GSPO



› Australian Water Safety Strategy 2030

Since 1998, the Australian Water Safety Council (AWSC) has produced National Water Safety Plans and Strategies to guide the activities of the Australian water safety community and work towards a reduction of drowning deaths. The new Australian Water Safety Strategy 2030 was launched by the Hon Mark Coulton, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government on behalf of Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, Minister for Sport in conjunction with the AWSC at Parliament House, Canberra on Thursday 25 March 2021.

The Australian Water Safety Strategy (AWSS) plays an essential role in National, State and Territory, and community approaches to preventing drowning and promoting safe use of the nation's waterways and swimming pools. It outlines priority areas where Australia's peak water safety bodies Royal Life Saving, Surf Life Saving, and AWSC Members can work together to prevent drowning on beaches, at rivers and lakes, and in swimming pools across Australia. This new AWSS seeks to raise awareness about non-fatal drowning incidents, encourage communities to create local water safety plans and promote access to swimming and water safety skills for all Australians, including refugees, migrants and those living in regional areas.

The AWSS 2030 presents a framework that:

- Identifies the key drowning prevention priorities, areas of focus and approaches
- Establishes a roadmap for action that may be monitored, supported, and celebrated
- Inspires stakeholders; Governments, organisations, and communities to act.

This framework is structured into five Priority Areas: People, Places, Activities, Populations and Risk Factors.

For more information

<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/research-and-policy/australian-water-safety/australian-water-safety-strategy>



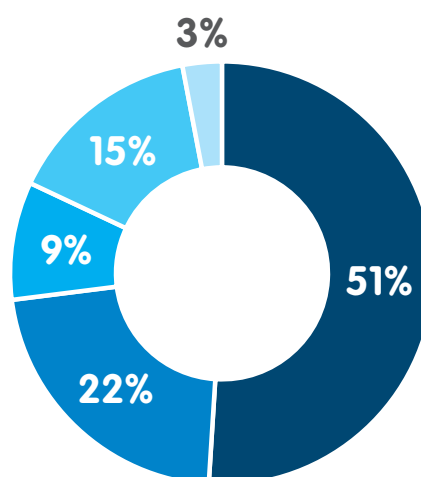
> Overview of AFSA Results for 2020-21

In 2020-2021, Royal Life Saving's Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment (AFSA) rated the safety of 90 public swimming pools against a range of industry, state and national standards, guidelines, and legislative provisions.

The AFSA is tailored to an individual pool, based on the design, water spaces, features, and programs available. The output of the process covers the pool safety and compliance levels achieved as well as information on strategies to further improve safety, using risk management principles. The assessment enables the development of a detailed report of the safety standards demonstrated against the assessment criteria.

Each report includes a Safety Improvement Plan which provides practical improvement opportunities for each non-compliance question.

AFSA Breakdown By Management 2020-2021



- Council
- Belgravia Leisure
- The YMCA NSW
- Private Operators
- Other

Figure 1. Assessment Locations

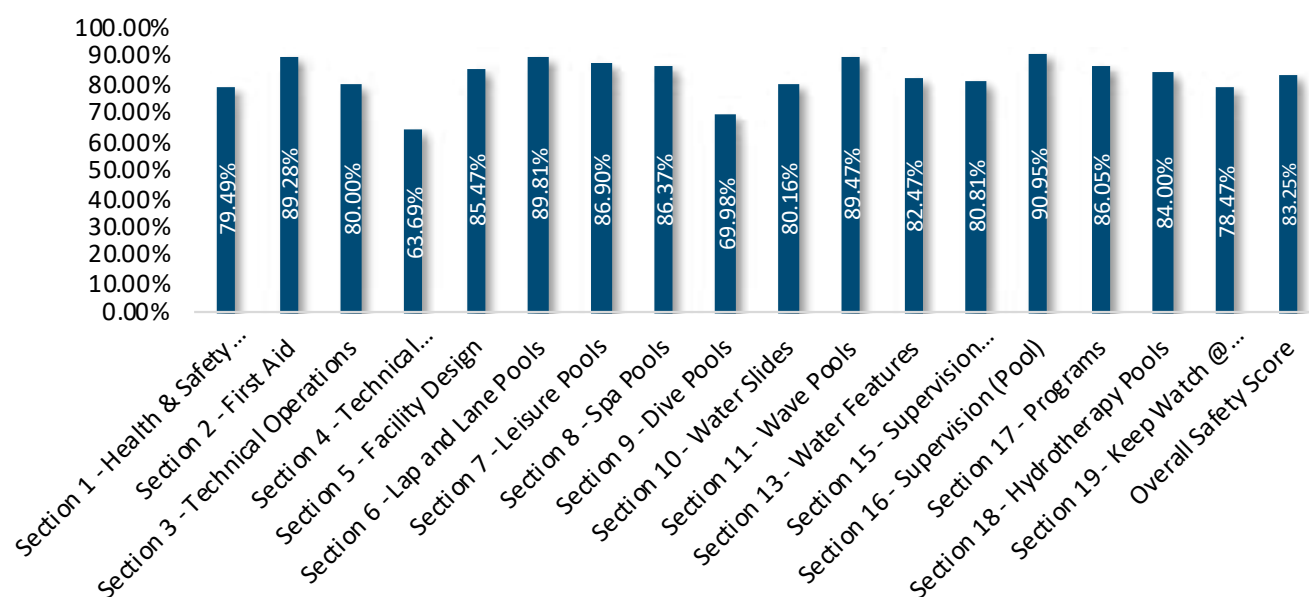


BREAKDOWN OF 2020-21 KEY ASSESSMENT SECTIONS

There are nineteen (19) sections in the AFSA. Each section consists of a number of criteria directly relating to the application of the GSPO in an individual aquatic facility. Depending on the varied infrastructure at each aquatic facility; different sections and assessment criteria are activated or deactivated as they apply.

Each item within each Section is assessed as being either compliant or non-compliant. At the conclusion of the AFSA, a Safety Score is produced to provide an indication of the percentage of safety issues that the facility has addressed.

Comparison of key assessment sections 2020-21 (%)



OVERVIEW OF AFSA RESULTS 2020-21

The overall mean compliance across New South Wales was 83% showing that on average, an aquatic facility is not compliant with 17% of safety items included in the AFSA.

Mean Safety Score

83%

Of the 90 NSW public swimming pools assessed in 2020-2021:

- 61% undertake the AFSA process annually
- 20% had never had a AFSA undertaken prior to 2020-21
- 60% operated year-round
- 53% received the RLSNSW 5 Star Water Safety Partnership.

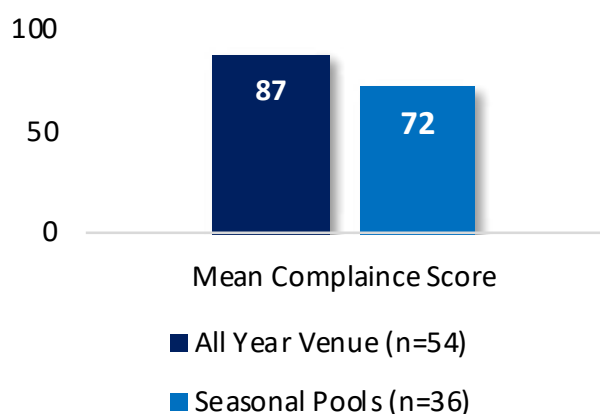
Highest performing sections

in 2020-21: Supervision – pool (90.95%), lap and lane pools (89.79%) and first aid (89.29%)

Lowest performing sections 2020-21:

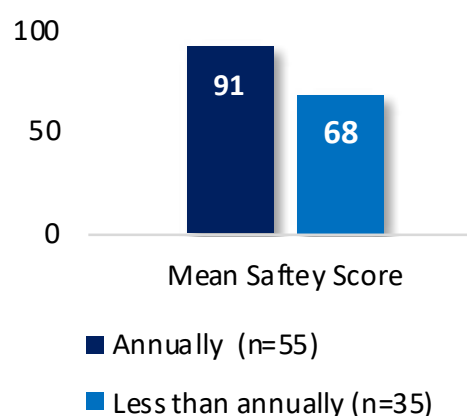
Technical operations gases (63.69%), dive pools (69.98%) and keep watch at public pools (78.47%)

Comparison of Mean safety scores between All Year and Seasonal Pools (%)



All Year pools outperformed Seasonal pools by 15% for overall safety.

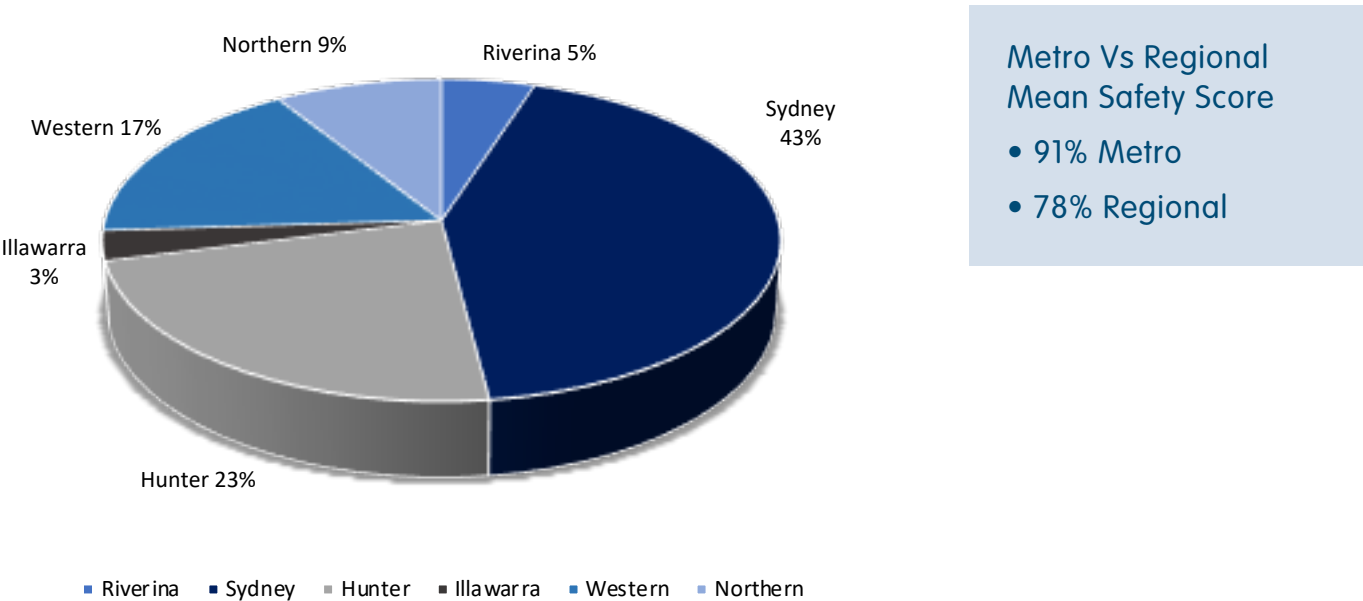
Comparison of Mean safety scores by AFSA frequency (%)



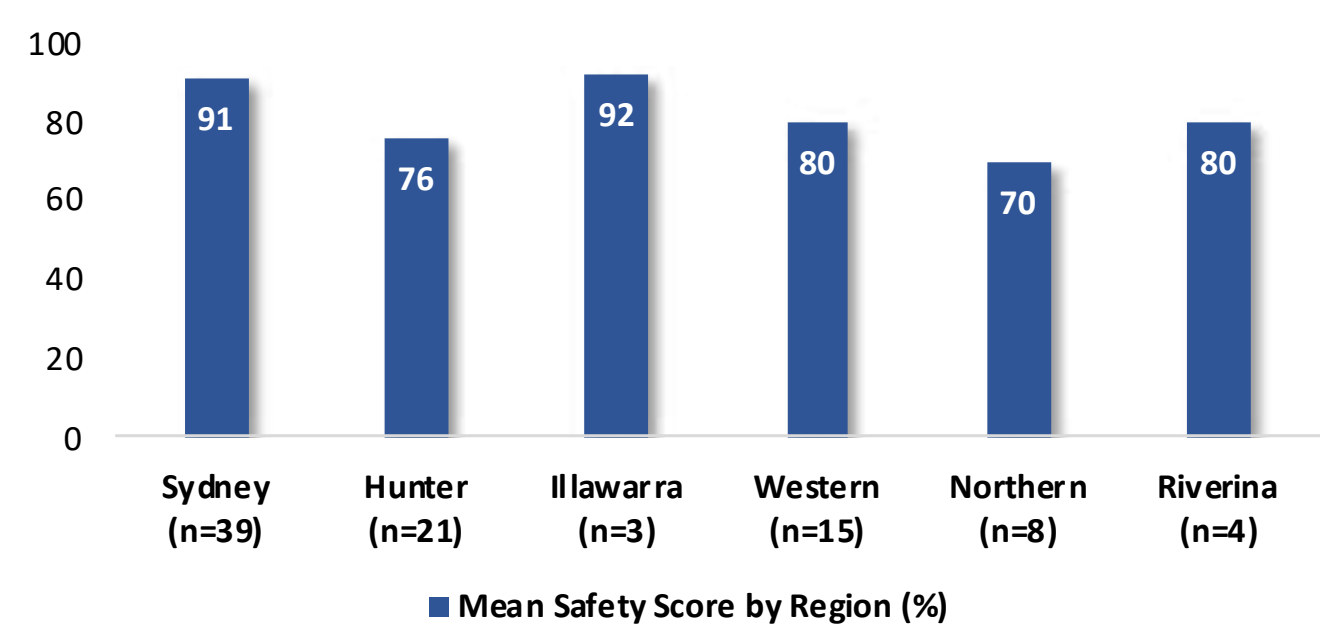
Facilities assessed annually outperformed those assessed less frequently by 23% for overall safety score.

METROPOLITAN POOLS VS REGIONAL POOLS

Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments conducted by Region



Mean Safety Score by Region (%)



Illawarra Region (92%) reported the highest level of compliance whilst North Region (70%) reported the lowest level of compliance. Individual venues' Compliance Scores ranged from as low as 29% to as high as 98% across New South Wales.



SECTION ANALYSIS - SECTION 1: HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEMS

Section 1: Health and Safety Systems is an integral part of every AFSA undertaken. This component of the AFSA looks at the systems in place that are required to effectively manage the operation of an aquatic facility and the documentation of those systems.

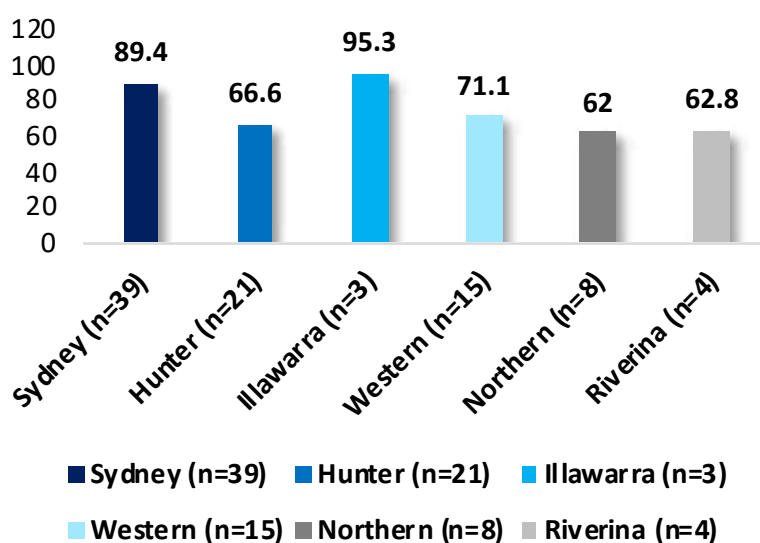
Examples of items that are assessed within this section include: the presence of facility-specific operational policies and procedures, emergency management planning and training, risk management procedures, maintenance systems and staff qualifications.

One area of the Health and Safety Systems that was highlighted in 2020-21 as scoring poorly across most sites was staff training.

79.94%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 1:
Health and Safety Systems

Mean Compliance Section 1 - Health and Safety Systems(%)



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 1.2 – Are there appropriate operational policies and procedures specific to the facility in place?
2. Item 1.19 – Is there evidence that all swimming and water safety teachers hold instructors qualifications?
3. Item 1.25 – Is there a system in place for preventative internal facility and plant maintenance inspections?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 1.8 – Has there been a practice centre evacuation during operational hours within the last 12 months?
2. Item 1.9 – Is there a system in place to ensure ALL facility staff are trained in the emergency management plan?
3. Item 1.12 – Is there evidence of a systematic approach to in-service training?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that facilities ensure staff or occupiers of the facility participate in a centre evacuation exercise annually. Personnel who provide emergency assistance should be trained in the relevant parts of the emergency management plan.

It is recommended that all staff participate in regular in-service training throughout the year or season to maintain currency of knowledge and skills. This was an area that numerous sites received low levels of compliance.

SECTION 2: FIRST AID

Section 2: First Aid is a compulsory section of the AFSA which evaluates the preparedness of a facility to provide emergency care following an incident or injury.

Examples of items that are assessed within this section are the suitability and provision of first aid areas and equipment including first aid rooms, first aid kits, oxygen equipment and defibrillators.

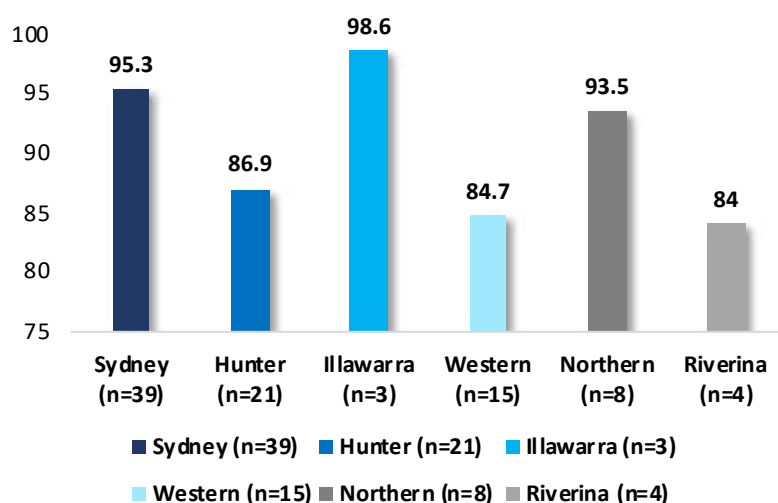
The most common area of non-compliance relates to the availability of a designated first aid room or area of appropriate size and configuration as well as whether that area is easily identified.

Another area of concern is the lack of formalised incident management processes in place across the NSW aquatic industry.

89.28%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 2:
First Aid

Mean Compliance Section 2 - First Aid (%)



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 2.14 – Is the oxygen equipment stored safely ready for use?
2. Item 2.18 – Is the automated external defibrillator stored safely and ready for use?
3. Item 2.10 – Is there a system in place to ensure sufficient stock of first aid equipment in accordance with relevant State or Territory legislation and / or regulations?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 2.1 – Is there a system in place for reporting of incidents and injuries?
2. Item 2.7 – Is there a designated first aid room or area?
3. Item 2.4 – Are injury / First Aid incident reports kept for an appropriate time?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that reporting procedures for incidents and injuries be incorporated in the facility's policies and procedures manual and that all staff are trained in incident and injury reporting procedures.

It is also recommended that First Aid treatment records are subject to requirements under State and Territory Health Practitioner Regulations. It is therefore a requirement that first aid / injury and incident reports be securely stored for a period of 7 years for an adult or until a minor reaches the age of 25 years.

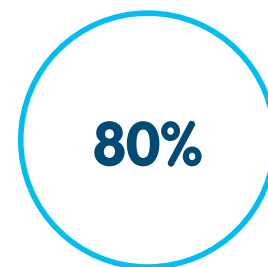
SECTION 3: TECHNICAL OPERATIONS

Section 3: Technical Operations is a section within the AFSA that focuses on aspects of pool operation related to the maintenance of pool water quality. This area is dedicated to assessing pool plant and associated equipment as well as chemical storage and handling. Whilst this area is one of the most heavily regulated, it consistently scores low in rates of compliance.

Examples of items that are assessed within this section are plant and chemical signage, Personal Protective Equipment, and chemical storage containers.

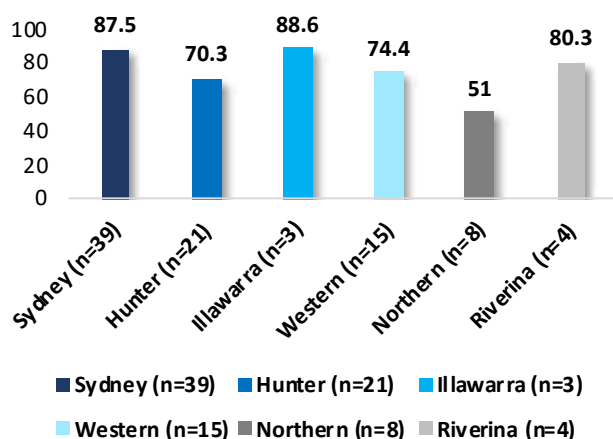
Correct signage in pool plant rooms and chemical storage areas continues to be the most significant contributing factor to low rates of compliance in this area with almost half of all facilities lacking or displaying incorrect chemical signage and Personal Protective Equipment signage.

In addition, safe storage and handling of chemicals was another area where improvements were identified as being required, particularly when it comes to identifying the safe storage and handling needs through a risk analysis.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 3:
Technical Operations

Mean Compliance Section 3 - Technical Operations (%)



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 3.3 – Are appropriate procedures in place for chemical spills and leaks?
2. Item 3.6 – Is there a plant operations logbook or diary and are adjustments and treatments recorded?
3. Item 3.21 – Are bulk tanks provided with appropriate chemical transfer points?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 3.2 – Has a risk assessment been conducted on the storage and use of chemicals?
2. Item 3.16 – Has a manifest of hazardous chemicals been prepared?
3. Item 3.17 – Does the manifest of hazardous chemicals contain the following information?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that a risk management analysis is undertaken on hazardous chemicals to identify which staff members are at risk of exposure, determine what sources and processes are causing that risk, identify if and what kind of control measures should be implemented and assess the effectiveness of existing control measures.

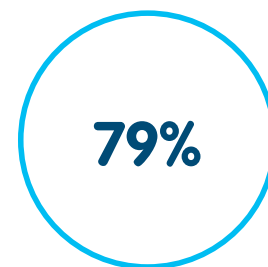
It is also recommended that aquatic facilities prepare and maintain a manifest of hazardous chemicals if the chemicals exceed threshold amounts. This is an area that received consistently low scores at numerous sites.

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL OPERATIONS (GASES)

Section 4: Technical Operations (Gases) is a section within the AFSA that focuses on aspects of pool operation related to the use of chlorine gas or ozone. Whilst there are only a limited number of facilities that utilise chlorine gas or ozone the scores are consistently low in regard to compliance.

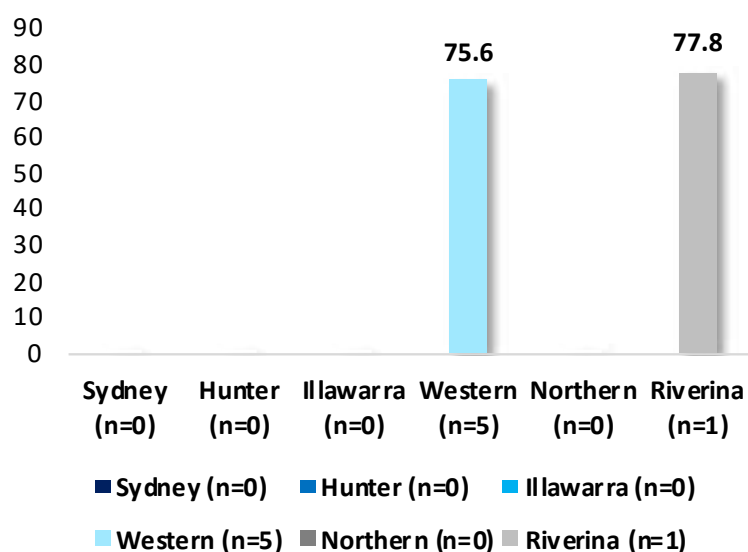
Examples of items that are assessed within this section are quality of self-contained breathing apparatus, leak detection systems, appropriate location of chlorine gas cylinders and vacuum regulators.

The most common area of non-compliance relates to staff training when it comes to chlorine gas. Despite the availability of breathing apparatus across most venues, more than half of the sites assessed did not adequately train staff to use the equipment.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 4:
Technical Operations (Gases)

Mean Compliance Section 4 - Technical Operations (Gases)



Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that all staff dealing with chlorine gas or ozone receive appropriate training. Training should include, but is not limited to, the safe storage and handling of gases, procedures for the use of gases, the use of a self-contained breathing apparatus, first aid and emergency management procedures.

It is also recommended that signage indicating restricted access be clearly displayed at entrances to and inside, storage areas where gas cylinders and drums are located.

Areas of Strength:

1. Item 4.2 – Is a SDS available?
2. Item 4.3 – Is a self-contained breathing apparatus provided and appropriately stored?
3. Item 4.10 – Are Chlorine gas cylinders appropriately stored?

Areas of Improvement:

4. Item 4.1 – Do staff dealing with chlorine gas or ozone have appropriate training?
5. Item 4.5 – Is 'access control' signage displayed?
6. Item 4.8 – Is connected chlorine gas appropriately located?

SECTION 5: FACILITY DESIGN

Section 5: Facility Design is a compulsory section of the AFSA that assesses design in relation to the safe operation of an aquatic Facility.

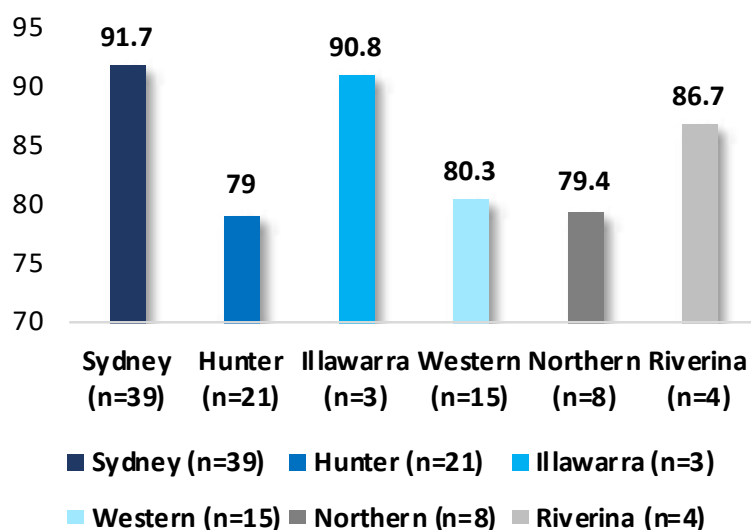
Examples of items that are assessed within this section are: emergency lighting and fire detection systems, change facilities, air handling systems, tag and testing of electrical equipment and grandstand design.

The main areas of concern when it comes to the facility design section has to do with change room compliance. Of the five items that reported the lowest compliance in Facility Design, three related to change rooms.

85.47%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 5:
Facility Design

Mean Compliance Section 5 - Facility Design



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 5.11 – Are circulation spaces and other general areas, including change rooms, appropriately lit?
2. Item 5.12 – Are change room surfaces intended to be of a slip-resistant nature?
3. Item 5.28 – Are balustrades and barriers appropriately designed and maintained?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that accessible facilities be fitted with a 'call for assistance' alarm, within reach of the pan, to allow a person in distress to raise an alarm in the event of an emergency or where assistance is required.

It is recommended that information regarding proper bather hygiene, including the requirement for bathers to wear appropriate swim wear and shower before swimming, be displayed in changing facilities to help mitigate the risk of contamination of swimming pool water.

It is also recommended that step risers and treads be finished in a contrasting colour to minimise the risk of injury to patrons from trips and falls.

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 5.17 – Are accessible changing facilities fitted with a 'call for assistance' alarm?
2. Item 5.15 – Do changing facilities display appropriate hygiene signage?
3. Item 5.27 – Are step risers and treads recognisable?

SECTION 6: LAP AND LANE POOLS

Section 6: Lap and Lane Pools is considered a common elective section within the AFSA. This section assesses the design and layout of a lap and lane pool within the aquatic facility.

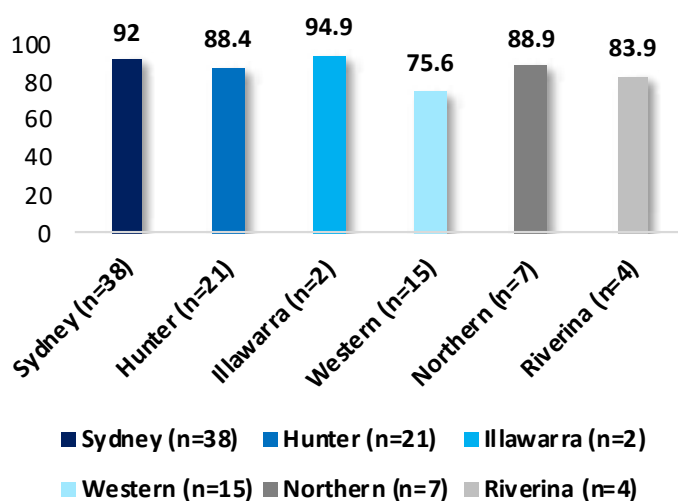
Examples of items that are assessed within this section commonly include water depths, water safety signs, lane space, surrounding concourse, wet deck/gutter systems, appropriateness of fixtures and fittings.

The Lap and Lane Pools section of the AFSA generally receives a higher score in regard to compliance across the state. The predominant area of concern for Lap and Lane Pools falls in the design, particularly in aging pools where they don't meet Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) requirements.

85.47%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 6:
Lap and Lane Pools

Mean Compliance Section 6 - Lap and Lane Pools



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 6.27 – Is permanently installed electrical equipment located away from the pool?
2. Item 6.17 – Are step and ramp handrails appropriate?
3. Item 6.5 – Is the pool space appropriately lit?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that sudden changes in gradient, in depths less than 1.6 metres, be marked with an appropriate warning sign and depth marker on the adjacent concourse or above the water and with visual indicators on the pool floor.

It is recommended that a 25m pool has entry and exit points provided at both ends of the pool and consideration given to having them on both sides of the pool.

It is also recommended that for a 50m pool entry and exit points are similar to the 25m pool, with additional entry and exit points at the halfway (25m) mark of the pool.

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 6.7 – Are there visual indications of sudden changes in gradient?
2. Item 6.12 – Are a suitable number of entry points provided?
3. Item 6.23 – Does the concourse appear to be maintained?

SECTION 7: LEISURE POOLS

Section 7: Leisure Pools is another common elective section within the AFSA. This section assesses pools which are not traditionally considered a lap and lane pools.

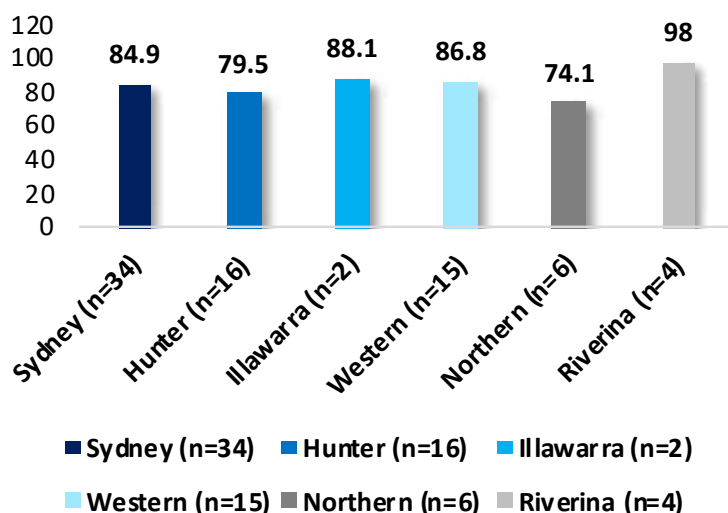
It is commonly accepted that Leisure Pools are one of the more difficult areas to make large scale improvements in compliance due to the costly nature of capital works in most instances. Pleasingly this section of the AFSA received a higher score in regard to compliance within the aquatics industry across the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Examples of items that are assessed within this section are the design of the leisure pool, water quality and appropriate location in regard to General Power Outlets (GPOs).



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 7:
Leisure Pools

Mean Compliance Section 7 - Leisure Pools



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 7.5 – Is the pool space appropriately lit?
2. Item 7.28 – Is permanently installed electrical equipment located away from the pool?
3. Item 7.30 – If GPOs are located within 3 metres of the pool, are they a minimum of 0.4 metres above finished surfaces and protected with waterproof covers?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that sudden changes in gradient, in depths less than 1.6 metres, be marked with an appropriate warning sign and depth marker on the adjacent concourse or above the water and with visual indicators on the pool floor.

It is also recommended that pool ladders which protrude into swimming areas be modified or replaced so that they are flush with the surface on which they are mounted. Stairs or ramps that lead into deep water can lead poor or weak swimmers into water that is out of their depth and increase risk of fatal and non-fatal drowning.

Areas of Improvement:

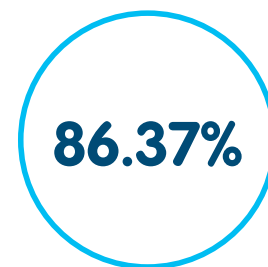
1. Item 7.7 – Are there visual indications of sudden changes in gradient?
2. Item 7.14 – Are pool ladders appropriate?
3. Item 7.21 – Are concourses a minimum of 2 metres unobstructed width?

SECTION 8: SPA POOLS

Section 8: Spa Pools is considered an elective section of the AFSA. The section is activated in those facilities that include a spa pool. RLSNSW assessed spas in 13 facilities in 2020-21. Examples of items that are assessed within this section are the design of the spa pool, water quality, appropriate depth markers and signage, emergency stop buttons and functional thermostats.

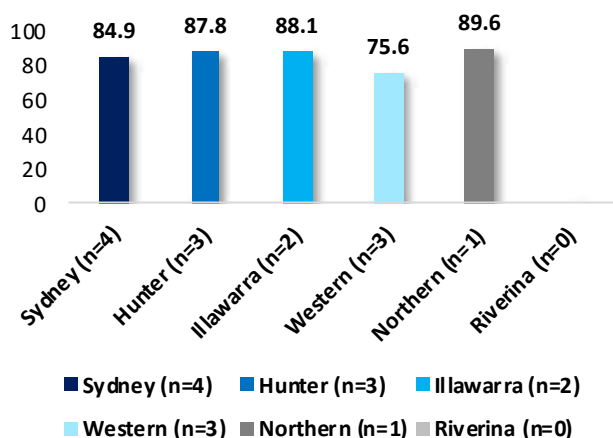
The main area of concern in the operation of a spa pool is the ability for patrons or staff to shut down the spa in an emergency. In 34% of spa pools assessed there was no emergency shutdown button that triggered an audible or visible alarm.

From the 2020-21 AFSA results for Spa Pools, it is clear that more attention to detail is required in the design stage in particular to the positioning of GPOs and widths of the concourses surrounding the Spas.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 8:
Spa Pools

Mean Compliance Section 8 - Spa Pools



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 8.1 – Is all water monitored and maintained within regulations set by local statutory authorities?
2. Item 8.12 – Are pool ladders appropriate?
3. Item 8.19 – Is the concourse free of any trip and entrapment hazards?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that an emergency stop button be fitted that shuts down the blowers and filtration. This shut off should have visual and audible alarms fitted to alert staff. Furthermore, resetting of the spa emergency stop button should be restricted to staff only.

It is recommended that the signs notifying patrons of shallow water be positioned around the spa pool. Water safety warning signs should comply with AS 2416 Water safety signs and beach safety flags.

It is recommended that the concourse be a minimum of 2 metres in width at its narrowest point and free of obstructions that may restrict pedestrian movement.

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 8.29 – Is there an emergency stop button that switches off filtration and jets and triggers an audible and visible alarm?
2. Item 8.17 – Are concourses a minimum of 2 metres unobstructed width?
3. Item 8.8 – Is appropriate shallow water warning signage displayed?

SECTION 9: DIVE POOLS

Section 9: Dive Pools was included in only 7 of the 90 AFSA's conducted across NSW in 2020-21. Items assessed as part of this section commonly include the design of the dive tower and pool consistent with Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) requirements, water quality, water safety signage, administration, and emergency preparedness for use of the dive tower both for competition and general recreation.

Dive pools represent one of the greatest risks in aquatic facilities, due to deeper water depths and elevated entry heights. According to the results of the ASFA's conducted, 50% of the facilities assessed did not have adequate risk assessments in place for the dive facilities.

A Risk Assessment is central to establishing a policy on the use and supervision of diving towers and springboards. As part of a risk assessment concerning safer diving, consideration must include all hazards and risks associated with diving.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 9:
Dive Pools

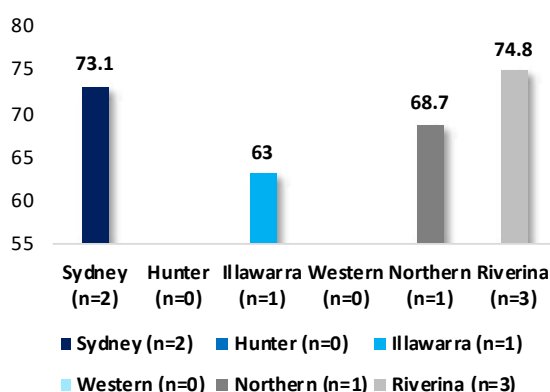
Areas of Strength:

1. Item 9.2 – Is pool water sufficiently clear?
2. Item 9.27 – Is the concourse free of any trip and entrapment hazards?
3. Item 9.31 – Does any equipment stored on the concourse obstruct a Lifeguard's line of sight?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 9.3 – Has a risk assessment been conducted on diving facilities?
2. Item 9.5 – Is there evidence of staff depth testing?
3. Item 9.8 – Is appropriate additional rescue equipment available for diving facilities?

Mean Compliance Section 9 - Dive Pools



Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that a risk assessment be conducted to determine requirements for the safe operation of diving facilities. Some areas to consider including in the risk assessment should be; users of the facility and their swimming ability, level of training and diving ability, manufacturer's recommendations regarding safe operation and environmental factors affecting supervision.

It is also recommended that appropriate testing be conducted on Lifeguards that will be supervising diving facilities to ensure they can recover a person from the deepest part of the pool. Diving facilities should also have additional rescue equipment such as swim fins available to assist staff in rescues.

SECTION 10: WATER SLIDES

Section 10: Water Slides assesses the administration, design, and supervision requirements specific to water slides in facilities that include these amusement rides.

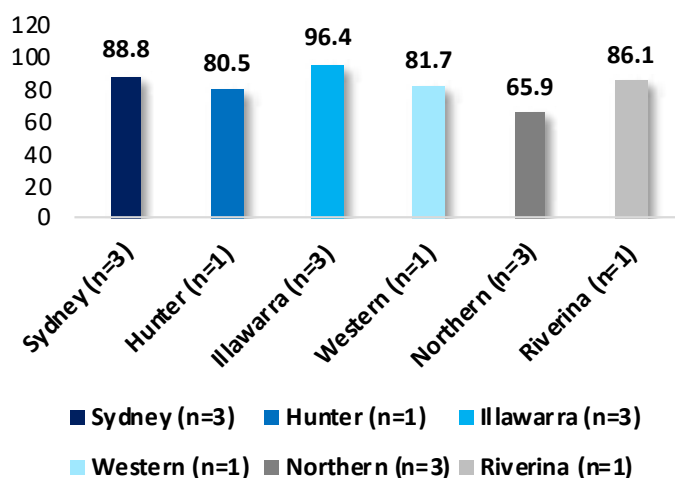
Compliance issues relating to water slides are commonly associated with the design of the ride and often include the depth, size or length of the splash pool and the exit from the flume. All of these design items are intended to reduce or eliminate the potential for collisions with either the pool bottom, end wall or other users of the facility that present a risk of injury.

Whilst water slide design is a significant contributor to compliance in this section of the AFSA, a number of operational items have also contributed to non-compliance. The most notable of these is the frequency of waterslide inspections and ongoing maintenance.

80.16%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 10:
Water Slides

Mean Compliance Section 10 - Water Slides



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 10.9 – Are access stairs and towers an appropriate design?
2. Item 10.12 – Is the slide / flume surface material smooth and aligned?
3. Item 10.16 – Is the pool surface in the splash (landing) area intended to be slip-resistant and non-abrasive?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that all inspection and maintenance activities are performed by a competent person and are recorded in a logbook or another appropriate means.

It is also recommended that an emergency stop button be fitted that shuts down the water flow to the slide. This shut off should have visual and audible alarms fitted to alert staff.

Slide exits should be positioned parallel and a minimum of 2 metres from each other to eject riders from the same side. Where this is not possible, consideration should be given to restricting the operation of the water slides so that only one slide is operated at any given time.

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 10.6 – Is an inspection and maintenance history available?
2. Item 10.20 – Is the concourse a minimum of 2 metres unobstructed width?
3. Item 10.24 – Is an appropriate emergency stop switch available?

SECTION 11: WAVE POOL

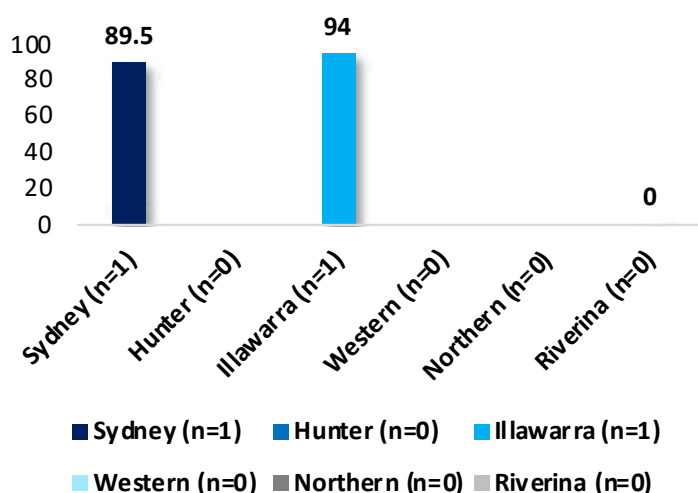
Section 11: Wave Pool is an infrequent inclusion in the AFSA where only 2 out of the 90 facilities assessed included wave pools. Items assessed as part of this Section include safety related concerns generated as a result of the unique aquatic environment such as; the criteria for determining wave pattern, frequency, and amplitude; wave pool controls; fixtures, fittings, and obstructions in the wave pool; supervision and patron awareness of wave sessions.

This section was an area that scored highly in regard to mean compliance however, improvements can be made to staff training and the safe operation of the wave pool.

89.47%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 11:
Wave Pool

Mean Compliance Section 11 - Wave Pool



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 11.2 – Is pool water sufficiently clear?
2. Item 11.5 – Are fixtures and fittings finished flush with no sharp protruding edges?
3. Item 11.19 – Are concourses a minimum of 2 metres unobstructed width?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that a system is implemented to ensure all Lifeguards required to supervise the wave pool are provided with training covering all aspects of safe operation including; emergency procedures, communication methods, procedures for supervision and safe bather loads.

It is also recommended that the pool floor is replaced with or treated to provide, a slip-resistant surface, particularly in depths of 1.6m or less. A slip resistant surface reduces the likelihood of a poor or non-swimmer slipping on the surface or losing their footing.

Facilities should also consider enforcing a bather free zone at the wave generation end of the pool, where the wave motion is most dangerous.

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 11.1 – Is all water monitored and maintained within regulations set by local statutory authorities?
2. Item 11.3 – Are staff trained in the safe operation of the wave pool?
3. Item 11.4 – Is the nature of the pool surfaces intended to be slip-resistant and non-abrasive?

SECTION 12: RIVERS

Section 12: Rivers is utilised only within those facilities that include an amusement or feature which creates moving water in channels to simulate the flow of a river.

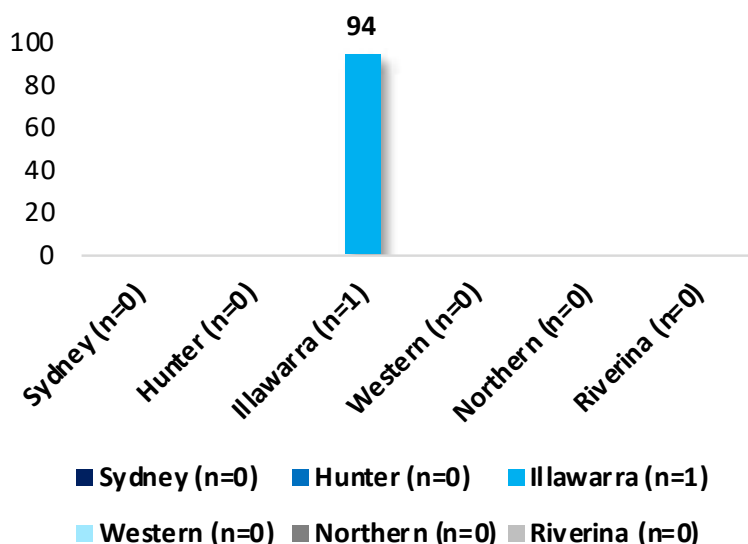
In 2020-21 there was only one site assessed with a River feature in the Illawarra region.

Examples of items that are assessed within this section are the administration, design, supervision requirements and water safety signage specific to river pools.

94%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 12:
Rivers

Mean Compliance Section 12 - Rivers



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 12.2 – Is pool water sufficiently clear?
2. Item 12.11 – Are No Diving signs displayed in water less than 1.8m in depth?
3. Item 12.18 – Is the concourse free of any trip and entrapment hazards?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that the pool floor is replaced with, or treated to provide a slip resistant surface, particularly in depths of 1.6 metres or less. A slip resistant surface reduces the likelihood of a poor or non-swimmer slipping on the surface, losing their footing and being at risk of drowning.

It is also recommended that facilities install emergency stop buttons within reasonable proximity to the river that, when activated, shuts down the flow of water and is to be used by Lifeguards in the event of an incident or injury.

Areas of Improvement:

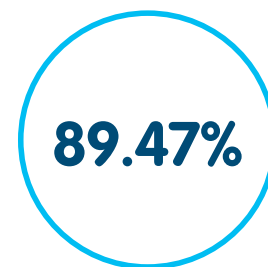
1. Item 12.1 – Is all water monitored and maintained within regulations set by local statutory authorities?
2. Item 12.4 – Is the nature of the pool surfaces intended to be slip-resistant and non-abrasive?

SECTION 13: WATER FEATURES

Section 13: Water Features focuses on aquatic-based amusements such as playground style equipment, small children's slides, water jets or showers and other similar equipment. Water features have become more popular within the aquatics industry, especially in regions with larger populations of young families.

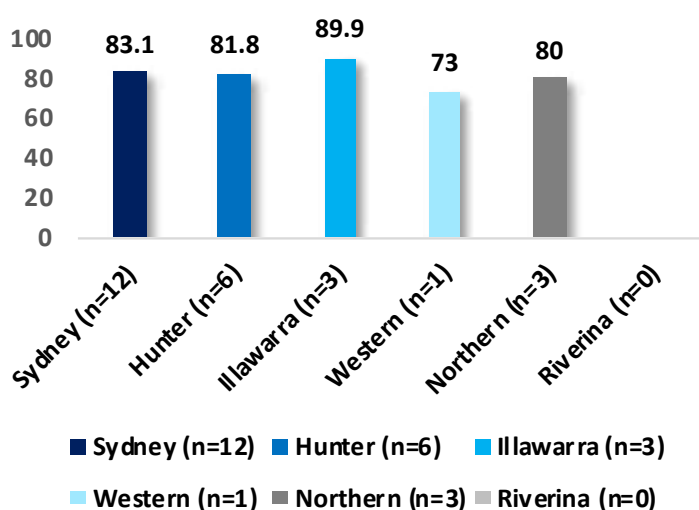
Water Features were assessed in 25 aquatic facilities across NSW in 2020-21. Examples of items that are assessed within this section are; supervision; rules or restrictions for use; and design of equipment.

The main area of concern is the lack of identifying, analysing, and controlling hazards and risks associated with the interactive features, with 48% of the facilities assessed not complying with question 13.2.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 13:
Water Features

Mean Compliance Section 13 - Water Features



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 13.15 – Is the concourse free of any trip and entrapment hazards?
2. Item 13.18 – Is equipment stored on the pool concourse positioned to allow safe traffic flow?
3. Item 13.19 – Does any equipment stored on the concourse obstruct Lifeguard's lines of sight?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that a risk assessment be conducted to determine requirements for the safe operation of interactive play features. Some examples of areas to be included are; users of the features and their abilities, type of activities and interactions, design and construction of the features and deployment, duties, or procedures of Lifeguards.

It is also recommended that rules of conduct are developed for each water feature and that signage listing those rules is prominently displayed near the features. Rules may include; age restrictions, maximum bather loads and parental supervision.

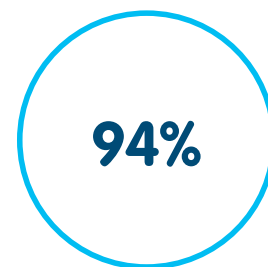
Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 13.2 – Has a risk assessment been conducted on interactive play features?
2. Item 13.11 – Are any rules or restrictions clearly displayed next to the water feature/s?
3. Item 13.21 – Is there an emergency stop button?

SECTION 15: SUPERVISION (GENERAL)

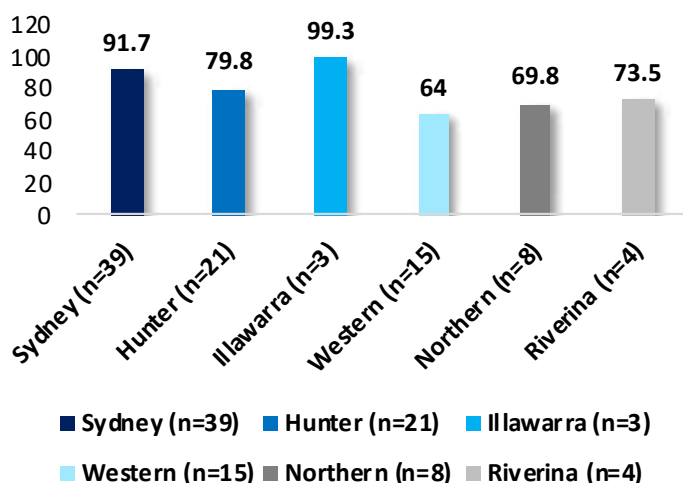
Section 15: Supervision (General) evaluates the risk management activities and systems behind Lifeguard deployment within the aquatic facility. The Supervision General section is compulsory in every AFSA undertaken by RLSNSW.

There is a clear difference between Supervision General scores in metropolitan pools to regional pools. With the regional pools scoring much lower in regard to the mean compliance. Several areas were identified as requiring improvement including determining the criteria of the supervision plan through a risk analysis, deploying adequate numbers of Lifeguards to supervise during operating times and regular routine checks of isolated areas.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 15:
Supervision (General)

Mean Compliance Section 15 - Supervision (General)



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 15.8 – Are effective and sufficient emergency methods of communication available?
2. Item 15.12 – Is the rule that children under a certain age (under 10) be supervised by guardians over a specified age (16 or older) adhered to?
3. Item 15.14 – Is the Lifeguard uniform suited to the performance of Lifeguard duties (including aquatic rescue), easily recognised by customers and staff, and distinguishable from uniforms worn by other staff?

Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that a risk assessment be conducted to determine minimum criteria for supervision at the facility to manage patron safety. The risk assessment should consider; users of the facility and their swimming ability, type of activities undertaken, design of the pool, deployment, duties, or procedures of Lifeguards to facilitate appropriate and sufficient supervision.

Supervision should be in place for all swimming pools that are situated, constructed, or installed on any non-residential premises occupied by the Crown or by a Private Body for public or commercial use. Having a minimum of two people on duty better ensures that emergency situations do not adversely impact regular surveillance duties.

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 15.1 – Has a risk assessment been conducted to determine supervision needs for the facility?
2. Item 15.4 – Are at least two qualified pool Lifeguards on duty at any one time?
3. Item 15.5 – Is there a system in place to ensure isolated areas are sufficiently

SECTION 16: SUPERVISION (POOL)

Section 16: Supervision (Pool) focuses on Lifeguard performance around a particular body of water and is considered a compulsory section anytime a swimming pool is in use during the AFSA.

Examples of items that are assessed within this section are; quantity of Lifeguards supervising pools, Lifeguard positioning for effective supervision and location of rescue equipment.

Whilst this section received a high mean compliance across the 90 facilities, there are still areas where improvements can be made to enhance patron supervision. Operators should ensure Lifeguard professional development focuses on scanning techniques as well as proactive supervision strategies. Staff training should be undertaken regularly to help sustain the Lifeguard's confidence in their ability to undertake active supervision, recognise situations that may cause a threat to the safety of patrons and effectively respond in an emergency.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 16:
Supervision (Pool)

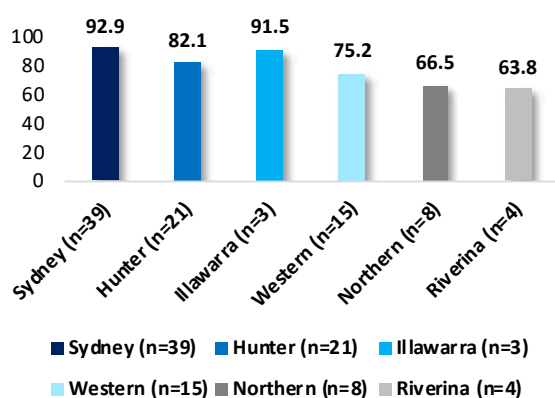
Areas of Strength:

1. Item 16.1 – Are there sufficient numbers of Lifeguards supervising the pool at the time of assessment?
2. Item 16.4 – Do Lifeguards have sufficient lines of sight to the pool it is their duty to supervise?
3. Item 16.5 – Are Lifeguards providing active supervision?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 16.2 – Are all areas of the pool effectively supervised by a Lifeguard or Lifeguards?
2. Item 16.3 – Are Lifeguarding positions sufficient to observe any part of the pool without excessive reflection from the water's surface?
3. Item 16.6 – Is rescue equipment located within reasonable reach of Lifeguards?

Mean Compliance Section 16 - Supervision (Pool)



Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that Lifeguards are in a position to maintain supervision of the water at all times. Lifeguards should demonstrate effective scanning strategies and be able to identify potential incidents in seconds and respond accordingly.

It is recommended Lifeguarding positions are identified that enable Lifeguards to properly observe all parts of the pool, at any time the pool is open and in any lighting conditions (except lighting failure).

It is also recommended that rescue equipment is carried by Lifeguards and located on the concourse within reasonable reach of Lifeguards.

SECTION 17: PROGRAMS

Section 17: Programs is used to assess the delivery of learn-to-swim and aquatic programs in the context of safety in aquatic facilities.

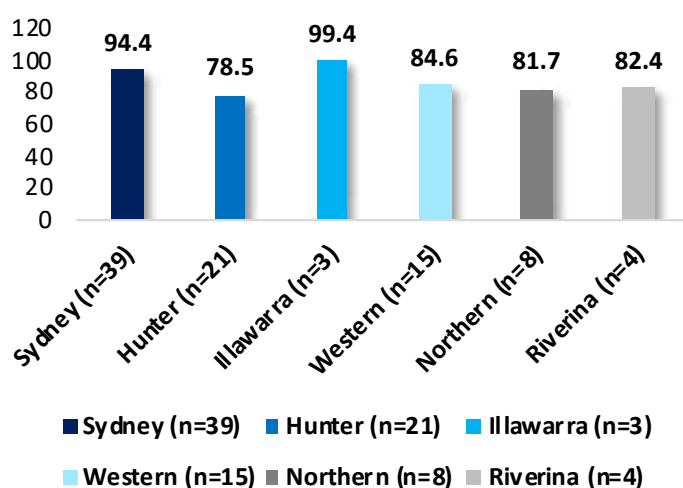
Examples of items that are assessed within this section are; instructor to participant ratios, enrolment and parental consent process and swimming and water safety teachers guidelines for the teaching of diving.

The 2020-21 AFSA results highlighted the need for facilities to evaluate their hire agreement forms and ensure that hirers are provided with a copy of emergency management procedures and undertake onsite inductions.

86.05%

NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 17:
Programs

Mean Compliance Section 17 - Programs



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 17.9 – Are programs held in areas appropriate to the level and activity being taught and the abilities of participants?
2. Item 17.11 – Do swimming and water safety teachers observe guidelines for the teaching of diving?
3. Item 17.13 – Is flotation and instructional equipment in good condition?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 17.1 – If diving is taught in depths below 1.5m has a risk assessment been completed?
2. Item 17.4 – Is there evidence that (non-facility) hire group staff are provided with a copy of emergency management procedures?
3. Item 17.7 – Is there a system in place to seek information and about pre-existing medical conditions of program participants?

Key Recommendations:

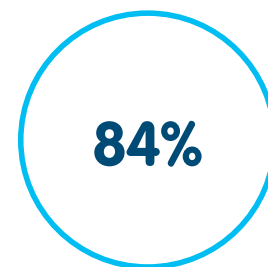
It is recommended that a risk assessment be completed if teaching diving into depths shallower than 1.5 metres. It is recommended that the diving risk assessment be recorded and retained.

It is also recommended that all external hirers of the facility be provided with a copy of the facilities relevant emergency management procedures and are provided with basic instruction in their roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency.

SECTION 18: HYDROTHERAPY POOLS

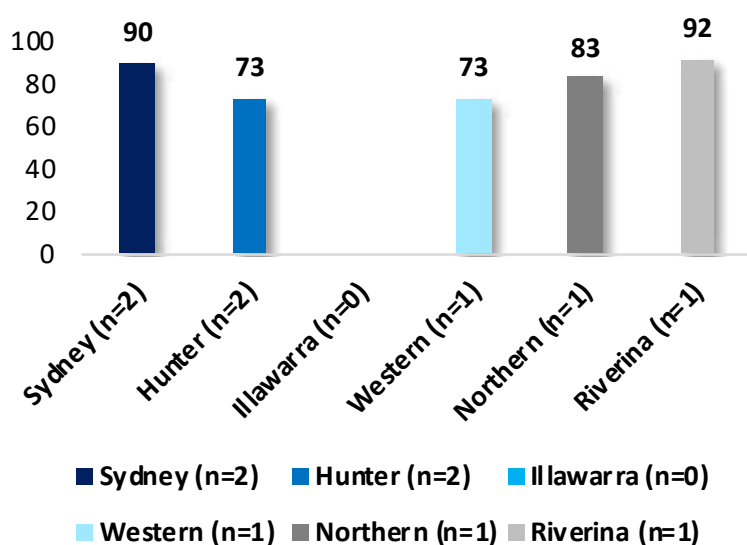
Section 18: Hydrotherapy Pools is activated in those facilities that include a hydrotherapy pool. Of the 90 facilities assessed, 7 included hydrotherapy pools. This Section incorporates elements of hydrotherapy pool design, safety signage, access to amenities, emergency preparedness and response relating specifically to the hydrotherapy pool.

Whilst hydrotherapy pool design is a significant contributor to compliance in this particular section of the AFSA, a number of operational items have also contributed to non-compliance. The most notable of these is signage relating to the use and restrictions of the hydrotherapy pool in appropriate locations.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 18:
Hydrotherapy Pools

Mean Compliance Section 18 - Hydrotherapy Pools



Areas of Strength:

1. Item 18.3 – Is the nature of the pool surfaces intended to be slip-resistant and non-abrasive?
2. Item 18.28 – Is permanently installed electrical equipment located away from the pool?
3. Item 18.34 – Is the pool operated at an appropriate temperature of between 30-36 degrees Celsius?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 18.12 – Is signage relating to the use and restrictions of the hydrotherapy pool displayed?
2. Item 18.21 – Are concourses a minimum of 2 metres unobstructed width?
3. Item 18.29 – Are General Power Outlets (GPOs) located at least 3m from the pool?

Key Recommendations:

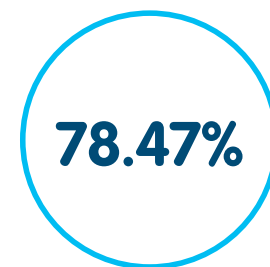
It is recommended that signage relating the use of the hydrotherapy pool be placed in a position where they can be seen by users before entering the water and is visible from the pool side and within the water.

It is also recommended that general purpose outlets (GPOs) be at least 1.25m distance from the nearest pool and at least 0.45m above the floor level. Waterproof covers should be provided over the GPOs.

SECTION 19: KEEP WATCH AT PUBLIC POOLS (KW@PP)

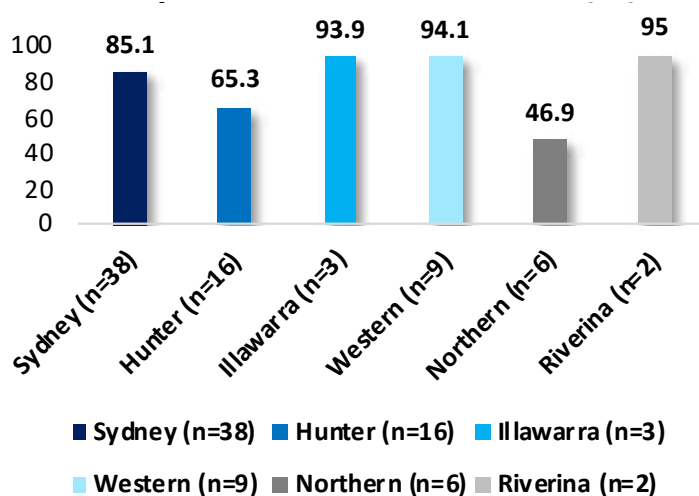
Section 19: Keep Watch at Public Pools focuses on the implementation of the Keep Watch at Public Pools education program. Examples of items that are assessed within this section are; whether the aquatic facility is a current KW@PP Partner, whether the facility takes proactive steps to communicate with patrons regarding parental supervision and how well the program is adhered to.

The 2020-21 AFSA results highlighted a need for more focus to be shown on incorporating Keep Watch at Public Pools content into regular in-service training for Lifeguards. Furthermore in 52% of the facilities assessed Lifeguards were not equipped with KW@PP education resources.



NSW Mean Compliance
Score Section 19:
**Keep Watch at Public Pools
(KW@PP)**

Mean Compliance Section 19 - Keep Watch at Public Pools (KW@PP)



Key Recommendations:

It is recommended that Keep Watch at Public Pools program is part of regular in-service training for Lifeguards. A record of content and participation at in-service training should be maintained.

It is recommended that the facility make resources available to Lifeguards, such as the Keep Watch at Public Pools Lifeguard Information Card, to support Lifeguards in educating parents about active supervision.

It is also recommended that facilities take steps to communicate the importance of active supervision of children.

Areas of Strength:

1. Item 19.1 – Is the facility a current Keep Watch at Public Pools partner?
2. Item 19.6 – Are signs promoting parental supervision in support of the Keep Watch at Public Pools Policy visible in high-risk locations and at times of peak usage throughout the facility?
3. Item 19.10 – Is the Keep Watch at Public Pools policy adhered to?

Areas of Improvement:

1. Item 19.4 – Is Keep Watch at Public Pools content included as part of regular in-service training for Lifeguards?
2. Item 19.8 – Are Lifeguards equipped with Keep Watch at Public Pools education resources?
3. Item 19.9 – Does the facility take steps to proactively communicate with patrons regarding parental supervision?

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