



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES

MEDIA RELEASE – Wednesday 7 December

Enjoying a water way of life - Royal Life Saving Society NSW and ACT announces Summer Safety Campaign with Ambassador Matt Shirvington.

Ahead of ACT Water Safety Week and school holidays, Royal Life Saving Society of NSW/ACT is rallying communities to keep each other safe and enjoy the water this summer, with Olympic Champion, sports commentator and television host Matt Shirvington joining RLSNSW as Summer Safety Campaign Ambassador.

RLSNSW has launched its Summer Safety Campaign, as aquatic centres, community pools, riverside beaches and waterways in the territory prepare for the summer season.

Mr Shirvington said the call for safety this year recognises that socialising in and around the water is part of our summer way of life.

“There is nothing better than heading to your favourite swimming spot with friends and family, but it is really important we keep each other safe while enjoying the water,” Mr Shirvington said.

“This is not just about the beach, I was surprised to learn that most drownings occur in-land, 95 per cent of drowning fatalities are adults and 82 per cent of those are male.

“The message is simple: let’s keep each other safe around the water. Whether you’re fishing, boating, swimming, paddling or playing on shore, have fun, and stay safe around the water.

“There are four simple tips to keeping each other safe.

- **Know your limits and avoid taking risks**
- **Check the conditions before you head out**
- **Wear a lifejacket when on the water**
- **Supervise children at all times**

“For many areas in ACT it will be particularly important this year to look out for changing conditions since bushfires and floods have impacted even the most familiar waterways,” he said.

RLSNSW CEO, Michael Ilinsky, said while ACT was the only region to record a decrease in drownings, the recent 2022 Drowning Report Identified an alarming increase in surrounding (drowningprevention.org.au) NSW, providing a strong call for safety for travellers heading away this summer.

“The NSW region experienced a 34 per cent increase in drowning fatalities and injury from 2021/22 and a 67 per cent increase on the 10-year average – a strong reminder to anyone planning their summer holidays.

“Significantly, the rate of drowning in children decreased, indicating the strength of safety programs and awareness campaigns.

“Adult men were a significantly high risk.

RLS NSW/ ACT works with communities and governments to reverse this trajectory through the First Lap Swimming Program, lifeguard and partnerships with local governments and councils to provide swimming instructor programs and community facilities.

“This summer, we’re pleased to be partnering with Matt Shirvington, a passionate advocate for the health and social benefits of living, working and playing safely in and around our water ways,” Mr Ilinsky said.

For further information please visit www.drowningprevention.org.au.

Photos and B-roll available

- [High-res photos and footage](#)
- [Campaign assets available for download](#)

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