

ROYAL LIFE SAVING TAS
Annual Report
2022-23

ROYAL LIFE SAVING
TASMANIA

Welcome to the 2022-2023 Royal Life Saving Tasmania Annual Report

This past year marked another milestone in our longstanding commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of aquatic enthusiasts across Tasmania. With a legacy that spans more than 108 years, our vision is as relevant today as it was when we first began. We continue to evolve our services to meet the demands of an ever-changing society, diverse population, and the shifting needs of our environment.

Our focus on the future is unshakeable. The shape of our services is set to develop in exciting new directions that echo the aspirations and challenges of our diverse communities. We are passionate about providing programs and services that not only meet the needs of our ever-growing community but also foster safe, enjoyable, and fulfilling aquatic pursuits.

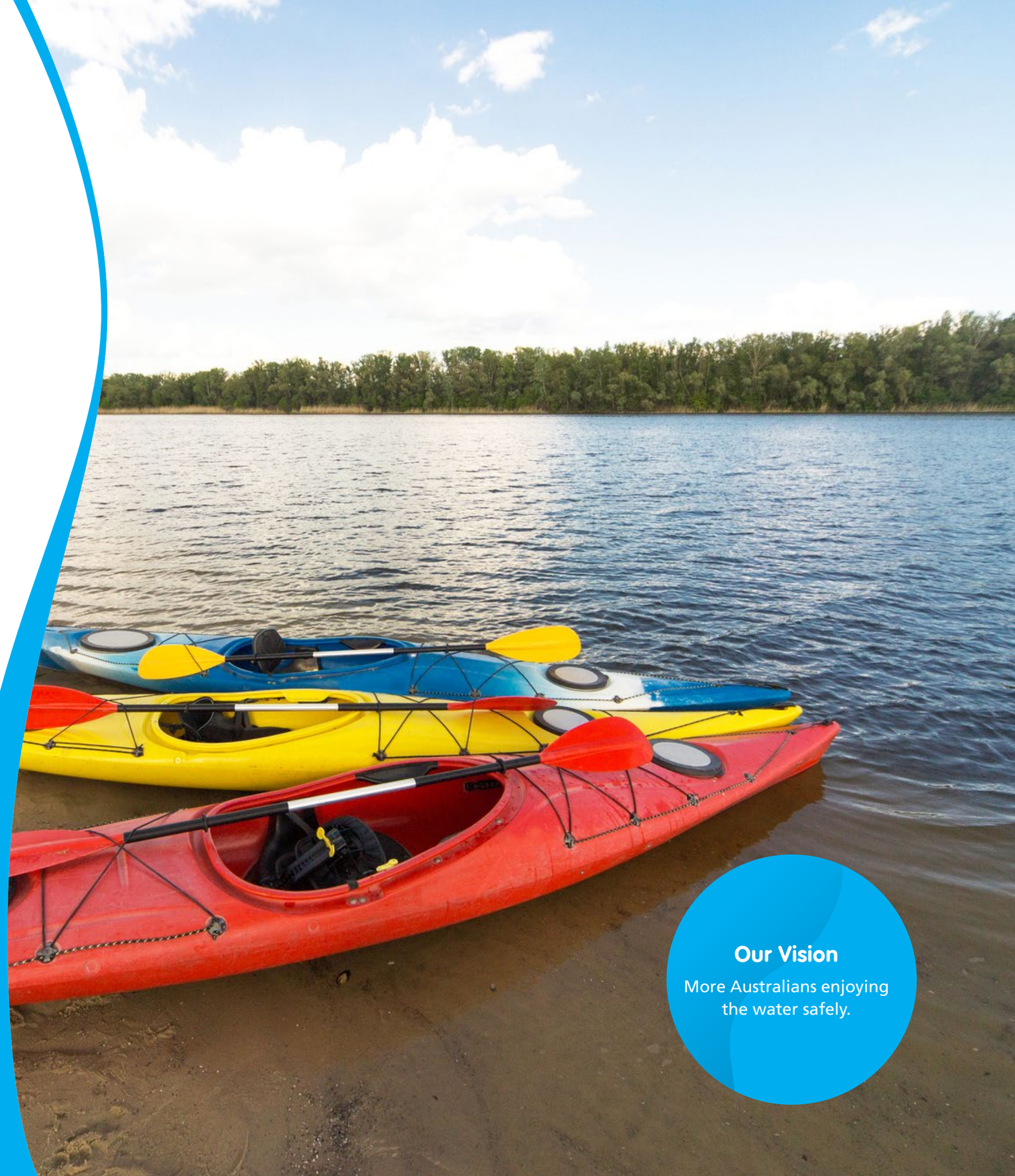
We recognise the strength in unity and are tirelessly working with our vast network of partners to explore and implement best practice principles and strategies. These collaborations increase safe participation across all aquatic environments and serve as a testament to our adaptability and innovation.

As a peak body for water safety, we leverage our robust structure and reputation to foster healthy and engaging aquatic options, both now and in the future. With new initiatives on the horizon and crucial investments with our collaborative partners, we are confident in our ability to meet our organisational objectives.

Through a shared vision and unwavering commitment, we are making significant strides towards key drowning prevention benchmarks. We are expanding our engagement across all waterways, creating safer environments for our community, and educating people about the importance of water safety.

While we celebrate the progress we have made, we acknowledge that our journey is far from over. Our commitment to enhancing the health, safety, and wellbeing of our people, partners, and communities is as strong as ever.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we are making a difference.

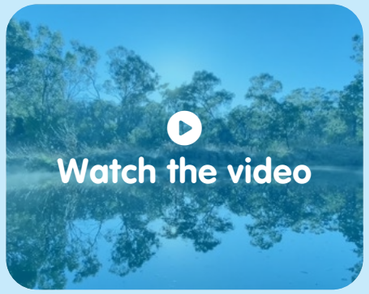


Our Vision

More Australians enjoying the water safely.

For all of time, Australia's rivers, creeks and lakes have been essential...for life.

And for over 108 years, Royal Life Saving TAS has been educating and inspiring Australians to enjoy the water…for their entire lives. We've helped millions of Australians learn to swim. We've taught the swim teachers, trained the lifeguards and championed CPR. We've led essential research and safety assessments and we continue to deliver innovative programs, products and services to ensure those we love… are happy, healthy and safe. Royal Life Saving is behind every splash, stroke, kick and paddle, behind every breath of life…to ensure we all enjoy a water way of life.



Reflecting on our Past

Since our establishment, Royal Life Saving has consistently embodied a culture of learning, innovation, and resilience. The contributions we've made have played a significant role in moulding the aquatics community and facilitating safe water pursuits. We've grown with our communities, earning their trust and forging an identity embedded in safety, knowledge, and community engagement.

An increase in population growth, greater access and utilisation of clean waterways, cultural diversity, and a surge in domestic and international arrivals has catalysed our drive for advancement. Coupled with an elevated interest in healthy and active aquatic pursuits, these changes necessitate continued, focused investments in our communities to safeguard the future of aquatic engagements.

Navigating the Challenges

We understand that community and market changes can present their own set of challenges, which demand our agility and adaptability. However, we also recognise that these changes are a breeding ground for opportunities and expansion. To maintain our influence and relevance, we must stay abreast of industry and sector developments.

While our unique offerings may sometimes limit our adaptability, we remain steadfast in our commitment to innovation and modernisation. As the custodians of water safety, our challenge is to advocate our prevention messages while also fostering a culture where Australians can enjoy our aquatic environments safely.

Our Future Journey

As we look towards the future, we understand the need to rapidly adapt to changing political, stakeholder, and community circumstances and opportunities.

We aim to engage communities more strategically and consistently, leveraging data to understand community patterns – from population trends and aquatic usage to public policy. We are committed to being innovative, investing in our future, and developing our people to build a safe and vibrant aquatic community.

Our journey thus far has prepared us for the challenges ahead, and we are confident that we will navigate them with the same resilience and dedication that has been our hallmark for the past 108 years. Our future is promising, and we are excited about the opportunities it holds.

Contents

01 / ACHIEVING TOGETHER

9 Message from the Minister for Sport and Recreation
10 Message from the President
11 Message from the Chief Executive Officer
12 Our Organisation - Royal Life Saving TAS
17 2022 – 2023 Highlights
18 National and Tasmania Fatal Drowning Report 2022-23

02 / OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

21 Resourceful and Vibrant Organisation
34 Growth through Leadership and Partnership
42 Innovative Solutions
56 People – Stability and Sustainable

03 / OUR CELEBRATIONS

71 Honours



Board of Directors

Mr. James Whiteside (President)
Mr. James Borbone
Ms. Lynette Harrison
Ms. Rebecca Shaw
Ms. Pene Snashall

Acknowledgement to Country

Royal Life Saving Tasmania acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands where its office is located, Nipaluna, 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.



01/ Achieving Together



The Hon.
Nic Street MP

The Minister for Sport and Recreation

Message from the Minister for Sport and Recreation

On behalf of the Tasmanian Government, it is my pleasure to present the Royal Life Saving Tasmania Annual Report for the 2022-23 period. I extend heartfelt thanks to the entire Royal Life Saving Tasmania community for their unwavering commitment and tireless dedication to critical water safety initiatives. Your efforts in safeguarding our community are commendable - and essential.

Tasmania's abundant aquatic environments are vital to our community, fostering social interaction and wellbeing. Our state is home to a multitude of aquatic jewels, from placid lakes and meandering rivers to welcoming swimming pools. These waters offer adventure and tranquillity, catering to enthusiasts of water sports, recreational activities, and those seeking quiet reflection.

The true value of these aquatic experiences lies in their safe enjoyment. The Tasmanian Government, together with Royal Life Saving Tasmania, pledges to lead efforts in promoting safety in aquatic participation. It is our joint mission to develop solutions and strategies that create a balance between safety, skill development, and the enjoyment of Tasmania's aquatic resources.

Our commitment to the future is underscored by the sobering statistic of 16 drowning deaths occurring in Tasmania in 2021-22, with the majority being male. We are actively addressing these figures to ensure that engagement with our waters is both safe and enjoyable. The Government is proud to support the work of Royal Life Saving Tasmania in enhancing aquatic participation and fostering resilient and healthy communities.

Royal Life Saving, in partnership with Active Tasmania, remains focused on addressing participation and risk to deliver targeted and relevant solutions. This aligns with the evolving needs of our community and their interactions with water.

In closing, I commend the dedication and efforts of Royal Life Saving Tasmania and its network of educators and facilitators who, despite great challenges, persist in meeting the water safety needs of our state.

Message from the President



Jim Whiteside

President

As the President of the Royal Life Saving Society Australia (Tasmania Branch), it is my honour to reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of 2022-23. Despite the ongoing difficulties that continue to affect families and vulnerable communities across Tasmania, the spirit of resilience and collective responsibility shines brightly in our work.

In responding to the needs of these communities, Royal Life Saving has channelled its resources and efforts into delivering solutions that not only ensure safe aquatic activities but also enhance the lives of those who seek enjoyment, participation or solace in our aquatic environments.

Throughout the year, we have been steadfast in our commitment to continuous improvement, working diligently to offer reliable and productive services. Our emphasis on creating social value has positioned us as the partner of choice for communities, suppliers and customers. We have fostered respectful and mutually beneficial relationships with the communities we serve and have sought to adapt our strategies to their changing needs.

The collaborative efforts of our people, our strategic planning and our operational systems have positioned us well for the future. As we strive to remain relevant, we acknowledge the shifts in lifestyles and priorities brought on by the pandemic and past environmental disasters.

In the coming 12 months, we have set ourselves significant challenges that consider the current and future environmental, political, social and health agendas. We aim to increase organisational growth by aligning our key deliverables with the needs and priorities of Tasmanian communities. Through collaborative consultations and engagements, we are working to develop a clear strategy that ensures we meet the needs of our customers.

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to our industry partners for their continued contributions to our swimming, water safety and lifesaving programs. In particular, I wish to express my deep appreciation to the Tasmanian Government and Active Tasmania for their unwavering support, leadership and guidance.

Our thanks also go to our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania, for your ongoing support and involvement. To our National office, thank you for your innovation and dedication to supporting the broader Royal Life Saving network. We are grateful for the support from Royal Life Saving NSW in aligning with our operational and strategic vision.

As we reflect on the past year, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to the Royal Life Saving Tasmania Board of Directors. Your unwavering support, sage advice, and proactive guidance have been instrumental in steering our organisation through a challenging period. Your continued commitment to our cause and for working tirelessly to make a significant difference in the lives of the Tasmanian people. Your support is invaluable, and I look forward to another year of meaningful work and shared accomplishments.

Finally, to our people - the staff, trainers, facilitators, advocates, supporters and stakeholders - I cannot thank you enough for your passion and dedication to our mission. Your unwavering commitment to eliminating fatal drowning and ensuring that our future aquatic endeavours are undertaken safely is truly inspiring. Let's continue this important work, together.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Jim Whiteside
President

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Michael Ilinsky

Chief Executive Officer

It is with a blend of solemn reflection and forward-looking optimism that I address you in this annual report for the fiscal year 2022-23. The period in review presented a myriad of complexities—chief among them the lingering aftermath of the pandemic—which has tested our mettle and resilience. The pandemic's pervasive impact led to the cessation of numerous traditional services and an unsettling shift within the aquatic industry, marked by job losses and operational disruptions.

In the face of these trials, Royal Life Saving TAS has demonstrated remarkable fortitude and agility. Our mission to reduce the incidence of drowning and to enhance the swimming, water safety, and lifesaving skills of Tasmanians has remained unwavering. Our strategic pivot towards digital platforms has not only allowed us to maintain but also to expand our educational reach, proving the efficacy of our technological enhancements.

This year, we intensified our efforts to connect with diverse demographics, with particular emphasis on culturally and linguistically diverse communities. By broadening our services and tailoring initiatives to meet specific needs, we have strived to cultivate a culture of inclusivity within water safety programs.

Our communication strategies have been proactive and impactful, with a series of social media campaigns launched to effectively disseminate vital water safety messages. The support from the Tasmanian Government and Active Tasmania has been instrumental in this endeavour, enabling us to foster active participation among the youth and marginalised sectors.

Despite the setbacks faced by the aquatic sector, including staff shortages and a general dip in community confidence, we have remained vigilant in our commitment to water safety education. The data from the Tasmanian Drowning Report, while showing a decrease in fatal drownings, reinforces the need for continuous, concerted effort in our educational and preventive measures.

As we forge ahead, our dedication to innovation and creativity in service delivery is stronger than ever. The imperative now is to deepen our engagement with our stakeholders to achieve meaningful and lasting impacts, especially among priority communities.

Our success is owed in no small part to the tireless efforts of our sector partners and staff, Karina and Bronte, whose dedication has been nothing short of inspiring. To our Board of Directors, your guidance has been a beacon of support through these challenging times.

Despite the adversity of the past year, Royal Life Saving TAS stands firm in its mission. With resilience, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to our cause, we look to the future with optimism, ready to broaden our reach and continue our vital work in safeguarding the lives of Tasmanians in and around water.

ROYAL LIFE SAVING
TASMANIA

Our Organisation

Royal Life Saving TAS

Since time immemorial, Australia's rivers, creeks, and lakes have been vital to life. These natural water bodies are an integral part of our nation's identity and heritage, a source of sustenance, recreation, and profound connection. Royal Life Saving TAS has been an unwavering guardian of these waters, educating and inspiring Australians to safely enjoy them, fostering a harmonious and enduring relationship between our communities and the water.

We have been instrumental in helping millions of Australians learn to swim, ensuring they are equipped with the vital skills to enjoy and respect the water while prioritising their safety. Our efforts extend to nurturing the next generation of swim teachers and training lifeguards, creating a robust network of professionals dedicated to maintaining a safe and inclusive aquatic environment.

Our commitment to water safety is also evident in our championing of CPR, an essential skill that can save lives in critical moments. Through our various training programs, we empower individuals to be first responders when every second counts.

Beyond training, we actively engage in essential research and safety assessments, constantly striving to enhance our understanding of water-related risks and develop more effective prevention strategies. We continually innovate, delivering groundbreaking programs, products, and services designed to ensure the safety of those we love, promoting a culture where happiness, health, and safety go hand in hand with enjoying the water.

Every splash, stroke, kick, and paddle, every breath of life taken near or in the water, has Royal Life Saving TAS standing vigilant behind it. We are there in spirit, backing every water enthusiast, every casual swimmer, every child taking their first dip, and every elderly person relishing a soothing swim. We are committed to ensuring that we all enjoy a water way of life, safely and joyfully.

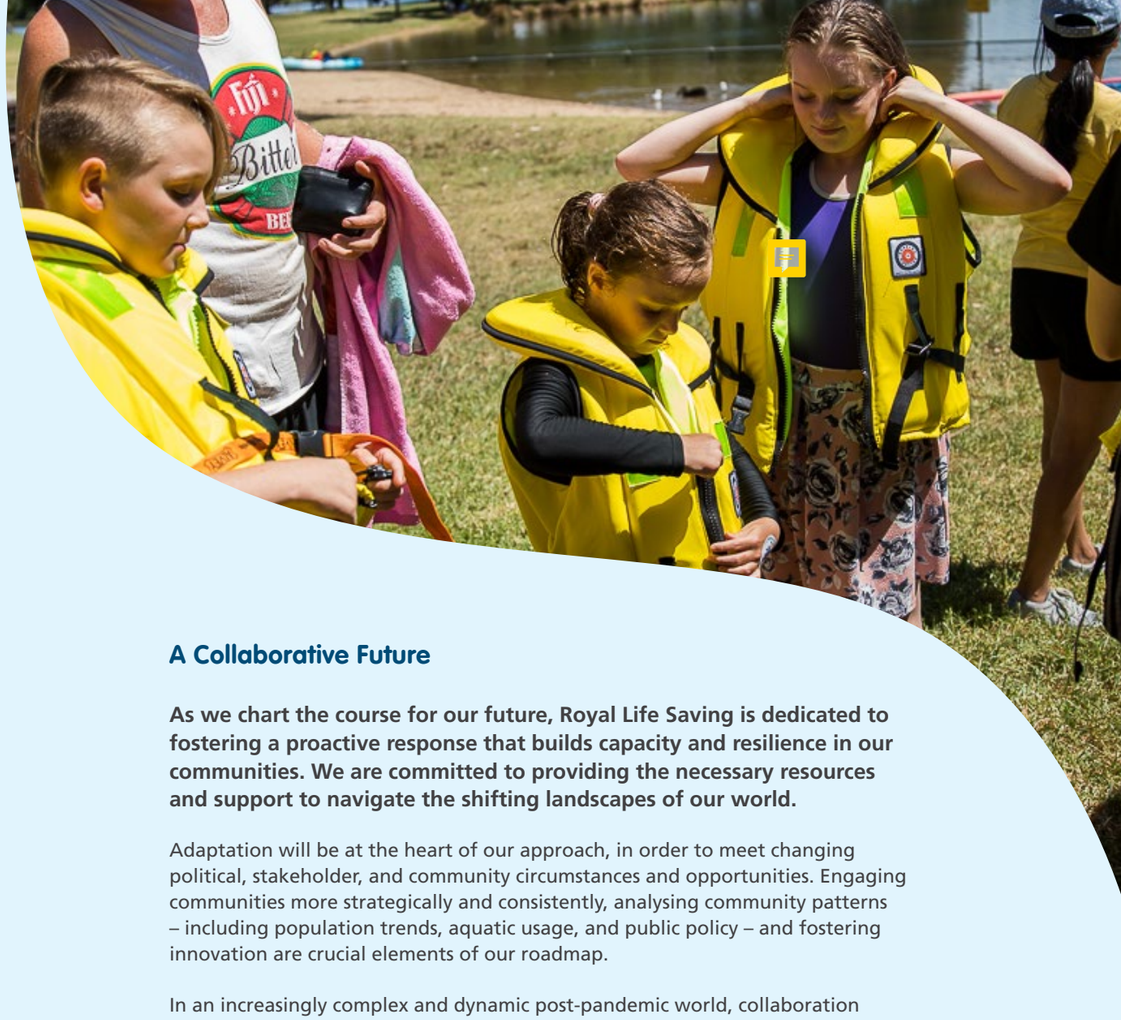
Royal Life Saving TAS is more than just an organisation - we are a pledge to our communities, a promise to protect and educate, a testament to the profound bond between Australians and their waters. As we look ahead, our mission remains steadfast - to stand behind every moment in the water, ensuring it's safe and enjoyable for all, for their entire lives.



Adhering To Our Values

Royal Life Saving TAS is unequivocally committed to delivering exceptional quality service to our communities, relentlessly seeking to enhance and enrich lives through our diverse range of lifesaving programs and initiatives. Our guiding principles are deeply embedded in honesty, respect, confidentiality, and compliance, providing a firm foundation for all our operations. We value transparency and integrity in our interactions, and we honour the trust placed in us by demonstrating uncompromising honesty in all our undertakings. Our respect for each individual in our community is reflected in our inclusive approach to service delivery, with an understanding of the unique needs and experiences of every person we serve. We ensure the highest level of confidentiality in our dealings, respecting the privacy and dignity of all members of our community.

Moreover, we are committed to strict compliance with legal and ethical standards, prioritising safety, quality, and reliability in all our endeavours. At Royal Life Saving TAS, we are more than a service; we are a promise to uphold these core values as we strive for a safer and better community.





A Collaborative Future

As we chart the course for our future, Royal Life Saving is dedicated to fostering a proactive response that builds capacity and resilience in our communities. We are committed to providing the necessary resources and support to navigate the shifting landscapes of our world.

Adaptation will be at the heart of our approach, in order to meet changing political, stakeholder, and community circumstances and opportunities. Engaging communities more strategically and consistently, analysing community patterns – including population trends, aquatic usage, and public policy – and fostering innovation are crucial elements of our roadmap.

In an increasingly complex and dynamic post-pandemic world, collaboration with our industry partners becomes more important than ever. By enhancing consultation and engagement, we can build a common voice that advocates for better outcomes for the communities of Tasmania.

We remain committed to our partnerships and will continue to work towards greater humanitarian outcomes. We are particularly mindful of those burdened by socio-economic disadvantage, isolation, or prejudice, and will strive to provide them with the support and assistance they need.

Royal Life Saving's stakeholder investment strategy is designed to raise awareness through strong advocacy and provide practical solutions to address water safety priorities. By understanding the triggers and causal patterns of fatal drownings, we can develop interventions that change behaviours, build resilience, and enhance skills.

In FY23-24, we will initiate the implementation of our framework for measuring social impact across our strategic priorities. This will enable us to quantify our contributions and guide our future actions.

Technology is a crucial enabler of our strategy. We are leveraging digital technology, data, and automation to improve our products, processes, and systems to better meet community needs. Our key priorities include maintaining business safety and resilience in the face of ongoing challenges.

We aim to architect our technology for the future, making our systems more efficient and flexible. We will harness the power of data, digital, and automation to create personalised and seamless customer experiences. Lastly, we will focus on transforming our ways of working, building internal capabilities and leveraging our technology and business process partners.

In essence, we envisage a future where Royal Life Saving, together with our key partners, builds a safer and more resilient aquatic community through our concerted, collaborative efforts.

By the end of our strategic plan, Royal Life Saving TAS will be recognised as the leading facilitator for swimming and water safety as an integral part of the Australian way of life. Our employees will feel energised by their roles, experiencing fulfilment in their career aspirations.

At-risk communities, irrespective of who they are, will be well educated and skilled to enjoy our waterways safely. Human networks, serving as a crucial part of our mission's success, will feel supported and celebrated. Governments will demonstrate a committed investment in the growth of swimming and water safety through Royal Life Saving TAS.

Our partners will share our commitment to unite and inspire others, witnessing significant value in their investments. Risk sector and land managers will acknowledge our profound expertise in maintaining the safety of our aquatic communities. Finally, the aquatic industry will align with our commitment to collaboratively grow the sector so that our waterways can be enjoyed by all.

At the culmination of our strategic plan, Royal Life Saving TAS will stand as a symbol of safety, collaboration, and enjoyment for aquatic activities across all Australian communities.

As we move towards our envisioned future, we anticipate a transformative shift in our public pools, aquatic participation, and the way we service our communities' ever-changing needs concerning water-based activities.



In this ever-changing world, we envision a future where all Australians can engage, experience, and enjoy our aquatic environments safely and confidently - a true "water way of life".

2022 – 2023 Highlights

Key achievements made by Royal Life Saving TAS during the 2022-23 period.

- 2,129 Vocational outcomes issued
  ↓7.3% from 21-22
- 91 new Swim Teachers accredited
  ↑ 18% from 21-22
- 1,467 accredited in CPR & First Aid
  ↑ 8.9% from 21-22
- 359 Pool Lifeguard accreditations
  ↑ 0.3% from 21-22
- 204 Students in the St Paul's Catholic School initiative.
- 4 x Public Pools under the Keep Watch @ Public Pool Programs.
- 4 x Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments were conducted with a Mean Compliance Score of 84%.
- 2 x in-service training sessions
- 2 x consultancy projects

This list serves to reflect the immense progress and success achieved by Royal Life Saving TAS in advancing water safety and swimming competence across the state.

National and Tasmania Fatal Drowning Report 2022-23

Analysis of unintentional drowning in Australia 2002-2022

Progress, challenges and data to inform prevention

The Royal Life Saving Report - Analysis of unintentional drowning in Australia 2002- 2022: progress, challenges, and data to inform prevention, provides two decades of data for fatal drowning incidents in Australia. Each number in this report represents a life lost and countless other lives forever affected by tragedy. To this end, the data presented here is intended to inform action that prevents future fatal and nonfatal drowning. By understanding and highlighting the details and long-term trends of these events, we can better design and implement national, regional and community responses that address the burden of drowning in Australia.

While anyone can drown, no one should. Tragically, 5,692 people died from drowning in Australia across the 20-year period, 2002/03-2021/22. Their deaths are a tragedy which rippled through entire communities. In recording the circumstances of their deaths, Royal Life Saving Society – Australia aims to prevent future drowning, both fatal and non-fatal.





02 / Our Achievements



Resourceful and 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.

Priority

- 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 Australia.
- Increased organisational influence and presence amongst priority audience.

A1 Maintaining and Expanding Strategic Relationships

As an organisation, Royal Life Saving places great importance on collaboration to effectively address the water safety agenda. Our working relationships with government and strategic entities enable us to influence change, develop policy, create guidelines, and provide vital services. We lead and assist in identifying priority water safety agendas, establishing strategies based on evidence and expert opinion.

The fiscal year 2022-23 was marked by significant challenges. Unprecedented environmental disasters and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic tested our capacity to deliver services and meet priority objectives with key partners. Extended closures and restricted opportunities forced many of our planned initiatives to be paused or rescheduled, which, in turn, has long-term implications for the communities of Tasmania.

As we look to the future, increasing healthy and active aquatic participation will become a priority for both Royal Life Saving and our community and government partners. Many of our organisational goals depend on a robust aquatic sector, capable of engaging directly with communities across Tasmania. Yet, this sector has been heavily burdened with a lack of community confidence, service reductions due to the impacts of COVID-19 and environmental events, as well as broad workplace employment issues.

Moreover, we have noticed that many children and disadvantaged communities have not returned to swimming and water safety programs. This could have significant future consequences for their aquatic proficiency and abilities. As we move forward, our collaborations with the community and government will need to adapt to the changing expectations of our communities, and devise tailored solutions to meet their needs.

Despite the complexities over this period, Royal Life Saving maintained a key leadership role, resulting in newly implemented policies to assist with community engagement and workforce development. This highlights our commitment to adapting and overcoming challenges, underpinning our ongoing mission to ensure the safety and well-being of all those engaging with our aquatic environments.

CASE STUDY

New Strategic Plan 2023-2027

We have developed a strategic plan for 2023-2027 with the objective of fostering a "water way of life" in all communities. This comprehensive plan hinges on five key pillars that serve as the foundation for our goals and actions.

As we embark on the exciting journey to develop the new strategic plan for Royal Life Saving TAS for the period 2023-2027, it is crucial that we reflect on our past to inform our future. We celebrate our successes, but equally important are the lessons learned from the areas where we fell short in our previous strategy. Our goal is to evolve and constantly improve our operations, services, and impact.

In the past five years, our organisation has made significant strides in saving lives, advocating for water safety, and promoting health and wellbeing through aquatic activities. However, we also recognise that some aspects of our strategy did not achieve their intended outcomes. In this new strategic plan, we will build upon our successes and confront our shortcomings, translating them into future opportunities for growth and improvement.

The landscape in which we operate is changing rapidly, and our new strategy must be responsive to these changes. In line with this, the upcoming plan will put a strong emphasis on the integration of technology. Leveraging advancements in digital tools and platforms will enable us to enhance our training programs, increase community awareness, streamline our operations, and improve data collection and analysis for more effective decision-making.

Leadership development will be another key pillar of our strategy. We are committed to fostering an environment that encourages growth, innovation, and excellence at every level of the organisation. We believe that empowering our people and developing future leaders is essential for the sustained success of our organisation.

Environmental considerations will also be central to our strategy, reflecting our commitment to sustainability and the recognition of the interdependence between our activities and the health of our aquatic environments. We aim to reduce our environmental footprint and promote activities that contribute to the conservation of our water resources.

Finally, we will continue to strengthen our organisational culture and processes. We are committed to creating a more inclusive, collaborative, and agile organisation that can quickly adapt to changing circumstances and continue to deliver on our mission.

The new strategic plan for 2023-2027 represents not just a roadmap for our future, but also a reflection of our commitment to continuous learning, growth, and improvement. We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and are confident that, with your support and collaboration, we can make Royal Life Saving even more effective and impactful in the years to come.



PILLAR

Leadership & Collaboration

We aim to fortify our leadership role in the aquatic sector, by increasing our brand visibility, forging strong partnerships with purpose-driven organisations that align with our vision, and cementing our position as the key advocate for the aquatic industry.

ACTIONS

- We are committed to increasing the visibility of the Royal Life Saving brand.
- We will strengthen and broaden our partnerships with purpose-driven organisations that support our vision and goals.
- We are poised to solidify our position as the leading agency for aquatic industry advocacy and engagement.

PILLAR

Participation Growth

We are committed to promoting inclusive aquatic activities, especially targeting diverse, regional, and vulnerable communities. Our actions include raising the bar for community swimming and lifesaving standards, fast-tracking programs that focus on adult swimming skills, and enhancing participation in lifesaving programs to cultivate a more prepared community.

ACTIONS

- We will champion inclusive aquatics with a particular focus on our diverse, regional and vulnerable communities.
- We aim to raise the communities swimming and lifesaving benchmarks.
- We plan to accelerate programs that focus on adult swimming skills and swimming in open waterways.
- We are motivated to drive participation in lifesaving programs, resulting in a more prepared community.

PILLAR

Safe Environments

We are invested in creating safer, more inclusive aquatic environments by driving investment in aquatic infrastructure, incorporating safety policies and plans for swimming pools and inland waterways through governmental and industry channels, and ensuring all aquatic locations are equipped with necessary lifesaving equipment and resources.

ACTIONS

- We are set to drive investment in aquatic infrastructure to enhance the community's ability to enjoy water activities.
- We will ensure aquatic safety policies and plans for swimming pools and inland waterways are embedded through government and industry cooperation.
- We are dedicated to ensuring aquatic locations and workplaces are equipped with necessary lifesaving equipment and resources.

PILLAR

Skilled Community

We aspire to enhance the skills of individuals in swimming, survival, and supervision. This entails strengthening our support to the swimming and lifesaving workforce, expanding our training solutions for a robust network of highly skilled community members, and growing our educational platforms to fortify community awareness in aquatic safety.

ACTIONS

- We will strengthen our support to the swimming and lifesaving workforce.
- We plan to expand our training solutions to ensure a strong network of highly skilled community members.
- We aim to expand our education platforms to strengthen community awareness in aquatic safety.
- We are committed to embedding innovative education campaigns to support community awareness.

PILLAR

Sustainable Future

We envisage a prosperous future for our organisation through the implementation of a diversified, cost-efficient, and forward-thinking business model. Our goals include leveraging collective data to optimise solutions and future investments, enhancing our social, humanitarian, and environmental impacts, attracting and retaining top talent in alignment with our strategic direction and values, and growing our membership base, satisfaction, and recognition.

ACTIONS

- We plan to embed a business model that is diversified, cost-efficient and forward thinking.
- We aim to leverage our collective data sources to optimise our solutions and future investments.
- We are dedicated to enhancing our humanitarian, social, and environmental impacts through our engagements and networks.
- We are motivated to attract and retain the best talent with a workplace that supports our strategic direction and values.
- We aim to grow our membership base, satisfaction and recognition.

The implementation of these strategies will be guided by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure continuous improvement, transparency, and accountability in all our endeavours. Through this strategic plan, we are confident of a positive and prosperous future for our organisation and the communities we serve.



Derwent River, Hobart, Tasmania

A2

Implementing Initiatives Aligned to Core Agenda and Community-Supported Priorities

Implementing targeted and tailored solutions that address key water safety priorities is central to our mission at Royal Life Saving. Through awareness campaigns, education initiatives, training programs, and other bespoke solutions, we strive to ensure long-term benefit and outcomes for our communities.

The past 12 months have presented significant disruptions to traditional swimming and water safety education for our children and vulnerable communities. Closures and workforce losses have profoundly affected the timing and availability of essential services. Moving forward, we will increase our emphasis and support to ensure children have access to comprehensive swimming and water safety programs. The collaboration of the aquatic and education network, along with community support, will be instrumental in addressing gaps and disadvantages that may have arisen due to these disruptions.

Royal Life Saving has remained steadfast in our focus on increasing participation opportunities in water safety, swimming, survival, and water safety programs. We strive to equip those without aquatic proficiencies with the skills and resilience they need to understand the risks and dangers around our aquatic environments, while simultaneously ensuring they can enjoy aquatic activities and experiences now and in the future.

Furthermore, we have directed resources towards our community and aquatic industry network and key partners to enable them to provide programs and services that consider health, social, and wellbeing factors. By prioritising these initiatives and investing in our communities, we aim to build a safer and more informed aquatic environment for all.

CASE STUDY

Swim & Survive

Royal Life Saving Tasmania conducted Learn to Swim and Water Safety for 204 St Paul's Catholic School students.

The "Swim & Survive Program" was held at New Norfolk Pool in Tasmania's Derwent Valley in November 2022 and was funded by the Royal Life Saving Inland Communities Water Safety Program supported by the Federal Government.

Students from kindergarten to grade six took part in the program over ten days. The program focused on swimming and water safety. The water Safety component included water safety education focusing on back yard pools and inland waterways, in particular the Derwent and Jordan rivers that sit on the boundaries of Bridgewater in Hobarts Northeastern Suburbs.

Students from the senior grades were tasked to go home and educate their parents/ carers on water safety in and around the home, inland waterways and swimming pools.

CASE STUDY

Tasmanian Drowning Prevention Plan 2023-27



The Tasmanian Drowning Prevention Plan has been developed with and on behalf of the Tasmanian community. Led by Royal Life Saving, with an extensive range of stakeholders, the plan is designed to help our whole community to better manage the risk associated with using the waterways in our region.

It provides a long-term approach for the community to reduce drowning (fatal and non-fatal) within Tasmania with a focus on 'Building Safer Aquatic Environments', 'Developing Safer Aquatic Users' and 'Designing Safer Aquatic Activity'.

This Tasmanian Drowning Prevention Plan is designed to work hand in hand with other Tasmanian strategies and plans to support the communities' vision and priorities. This includes, but is not limited to the:

- Healthy Tasmania Strategic Plan.
- Tasmanian Population Growth Strategy.
- Tasmanian Community Sport Strategy.
- Department of Natural Resources and.
- Environment Tasmanian Strategic Plan.

The Tasmanian Drowning Prevention Plan has adopted the Royal Life Saving's Safe System Approach to Drowning Prevention.

This approach is underpinned by these principles:

- Deaths and serious injuries are unacceptable.
- People are human and sometimes make mistakes – a simple mistake shouldn't cost anyone their life.
- People are vulnerable.
- Aquatic environments and activity should be designed to minimise the likelihood or severity of an aquatic incident if an accident happens.
- Drowning prevention is a shared responsibility – everyone needs to make safe decisions in, on and around the water to prioritise safety.
- Initiatives to ensure safer aquatic environments, users and activities need to be implemented together so that the community can enjoy our aquatic environments when recreating or working.

For further information contact Royal Life Saving Tasmania.



A3

Increasing Visibility of Brand, Core Message, and Protection of Integrity

As a highly valued and trusted brand, Royal Life Saving is committed to planning and coordinating strategies that increase sector awareness and articulate our organisational intent. Our reputation brings trust to our messaging and advice, and we continuously strive to partner with key stakeholders to maximise exposure and acceptance.

Australia's affinity with water, from our local pools, lakes and rivers, to our beaches and bays, is an integral part of our national identity. However, many of us overestimate our skills in and around the water, resulting in hundreds of drownings each year and countless more close escapes. This discrepancy between perceived and actual aquatic competence presents a significant risk to ourselves and others.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added to these risks by forcing the closure of swim schools and local pools across the country. It is estimated that millions of lessons have been missed, potentially leading to tragic consequences for many Australians and creating a generation of non-swimmers now and in the future.

Research reveals a concerning statistic: 40% of children are unable to meet the national swimming and water safety benchmark. Almost half of 12-year-olds can't swim continuously for 50 metres or float for 2 minutes in deep water. COVID-19 led closures have exacerbated a long-term trend of children in this critical age group not taking or continuing lessons. Given our lifestyle, swimming is not just a recreational activity, but a vital life skill. Lack of swimming proficiency diminishes the enjoyment of life and puts lives at risk.

As custodians of water safety, Royal Life Saving acknowledges its responsibility to leverage its brand and reputation to ensure all communities have access to vital swimming and water safety programs. Our mission continues to be to safeguard lives and create a safe, enjoyable aquatic environment for all.

CASE STUDY

The Role of Learn to Swim

A new report has assessed the delivery system of learn to swim across the Australian community. The report was prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Australia and commissioned by Royal Life Saving Society – Australia. The report includes recommendations to maximise the potential of learn to swim and improve our nation's swimming and water safety skills, which will assist in reducing the generational risk of drowning.

The report found that many Australians, despite participating in lessons, fail to achieve the minimum swimming and water safety benchmarks. Others are missing out entirely.

An estimated 40 per cent of children leave primary school unable to swim the length of an Olympic swimming pool. Twenty-three per cent of Australian adults report weak or no swimming ability.

The most vulnerable are least likely to access lessons. Barriers include cultural, financial and language difficulties. Cost of living pressures are compounding existing barriers.



PwC Australia. 2022. Towards a Nation Free From Drowning: The Role of Learn to Swim. Prepared for Royal Life Saving, Sydney, Australia.

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the problem:

- Pools were closed.
- Lessons were missed.
- Swim teacher shortages persist.
- Long wait lists prevail.

This all means deliberate and considered action is needed to avoid generational effects on:

- the swimming ability of the Australian population.
- the long-term drowning risk for children, young people and adults.
- physical activity, given the role that water plays in sport, leisure and recreation.
- sporting participation and success.
- Tourism, where water and water recreation are integral to domestic and international offerings.

The report identifies three overarching principles to strengthen learn to swim in Australia:

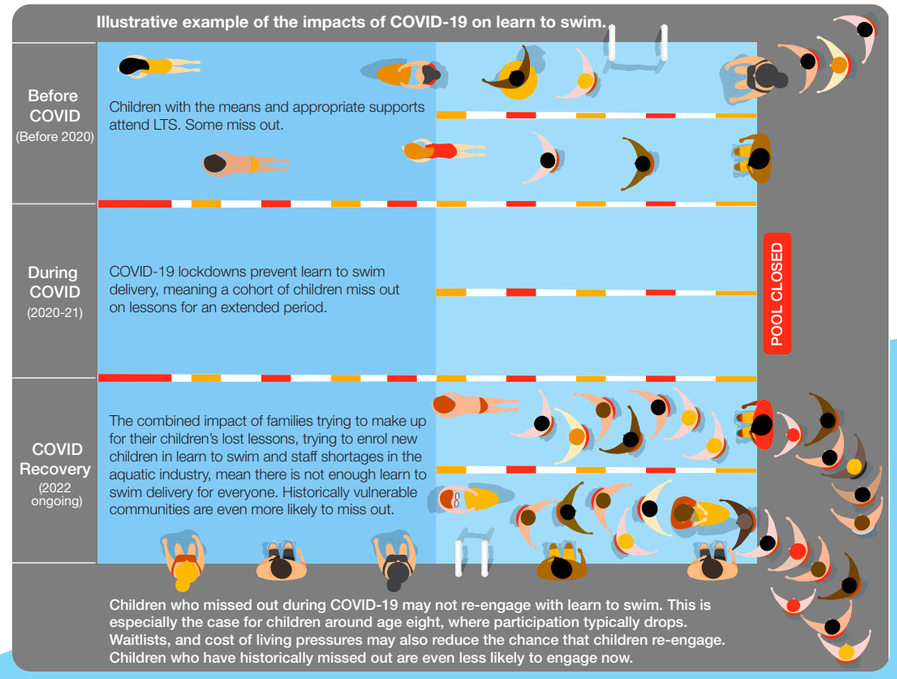
- Universal and equitable access to lessons.
- Supporting and encouraging everyone to learn to swim, reducing barriers.
- Supporting regional and remote communities by ensuring availability of pools and programs.
- Ensuring delivery tracks to the achievement of the National Swimming and Water Safety Benchmarks.

The report was launched on Thursday 20 October 2022.

Benchmarks for the age of 12 years.

This is even though a lack of swimming skills and water safety knowledge is known to be a major risk factor in drowning. The COVID-19 pandemic has compounded this issue, with close to two years of swimming lessons disrupted and an estimated 10 million lessons cancelled. Now, due to cost-of living pressures and staff shortages, the return of Australians into learn to swim is slower than is necessary to facilitate a sufficient 'catch-up' of learn to swim.

With reports of individual facility wait lists exceeding 300 children, wait times of many months and 25 per cent of families citing the cost of lessons as a barrier to participation, these issues are emerging as key risks for swimming skill attainment and have generational impacts on drowning risk. In addition to a growing concern surrounding general swimming and water safety education access in Australia, research shows that a number of groups are currently accessing learn to swim programs at lower rates than national averages. Multicultural communities, lower socioeconomic populations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people with disabilities are all found to be less likely to be attending swimming and water safety education programs.



Towards an Australia where everybody learns to swim

Assessment of the learn to swim ecosystem and the outcomes it delivers presents a range of findings and associated opportunities for further consideration by stakeholders.

	Relevant findings	Identified opportunity
Access Pathways	**1.1** Programs targeted to high drowning risk groups are emerging, but not yet established.	Implement expanded and nationally available targeted programs, funding or grants, focusing on groups at a higher risk of drowning. Explore partnerships and market-based solutions to maximise access to water safety education.
	2.1 Children are very likely to disengage from formal learn to swim education by age eight, and hence miss the opportunity to achieve the Benchmarks.	Explore incentives and funding which support greater retention and participation in swimming lessons for children aged between eight and 14, and to reach the cohort who missed out entirely due to COVID-19
	2.2 Due to COVID-19, two years of swimming lessons have been disrupted for a cohort of students, who are now at risk of disengaging with swimming lessons	Explore programs and education initiatives that increase parent and child engagement in preschool water safety programs, and increase access to primary school learn to swim education.
	3.1 School and early engagement programs can enable access for many Australian children who would otherwise face financial barriers to learn to swim education.	Embed consistent data collection and open reporting into government funded learn to swim programs, allowing more effective program evaluation and developing a broad dataset on Australian Childrens' swimming ability.
	4.1 Data on and evaluation of program success are not standardised or widely available.	Embed consistent data collection and open reporting into government funded learn to swim programs, allowing more effective program evaluation and developing a broad dataset on Australian Childrens' swimming ability.

	Relevant findings	Identified opportunity
Delivery Providers	**5.1** Commercial delivery generally targets areas and population groups with high demand for learn to swim education. **5.2** There are some examples of collaboration between commercial and public learn to swim operators, such as tendered management.	Consider incentives for learn to swim operators to provide services for groups at a higher risk of drowning, and for older children who have not achieved the benchmarks and who require greater pool space.
	6.1 Remote and regional learn to swim delivery is sparsely available during out of season months. **6.2** The aquatic industry is reporting acute labour shortages, which impact the availability and cost of lessons. **7.1** Swimming and water safety education is not always delivered in alignment with the National Benchmarks.	Explore opportunities to increase the availability of swimming teachers, such as employment pathway programs, funding training and ensuring mutual recognition of qualifications and licenses domestically (between States and Territories) and internationally
	7.2 Inconsistent evaluation and data reporting are contributing to lower national achievement of the Benchmarks. **7.3** Australian swim teaching certifications are recognised globally for quality and safety.	Assess the benefits and costs of potential reforms or incentives which promote greater alignment between learn to swim curricula and the Benchmarks.
Infrastructure	**8.1** Australia has a strong portfolio of public aquatic facilities, although there are challenges emerging. **9.1** Challenges exist to ensure regional and remote communities have access to aquatic infrastructure. **10.1** Privately-owned learn to swim facilities are often lower cost and smaller scale, and hence more responsive to demand. However, they often have less sophisticated facilities, which are not purpose built to teach swimming to a wide range of participants. **11.1** Public and private partnership on aquatic infrastructure development is rare.	Assess the need for state and national level strategic aquatic infrastructure planning to ensure sufficient infrastructure is maintained and developed to meet the needs of Australia's growing population. Increase aquatic facility access in regional communities, particularly remote Aboriginal communities. This may include cost-effective incremental investments, such as staffing, employment pathway programs or water heaters for summer-only facilities. Consider options to address deficiencies in private learn to swim infrastructure, such as partnerships with better-equipped public facilities. Explore the potential of private-public partnerships and outcome-based funding of commercial aquatics facilities in order to enhance the impact of the private sector, and more effectively serve high-risk communities.

Growth through Leadership and Partnership

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.

Priority

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

B1
Maintain and Expand Sector Leadership and Peak Authority Status

Engaging in capacity-building efforts and fostering cross-sector collaboration, Royal Life Saving continues to partner closely with sector stakeholders and other peak organisations. We strategically leverage these partnerships to lead initiatives that enhance alignment and cohesion within the sector. We are devoted to providing insights and implementing capacity-building strategies, fostering collaborative efforts to improve sector sustainability and performance.

Throughout the year 2022-23, we remained committed to bolstering and expanding key partnership initiatives, recognising the pressing need to stay focused and purposeful throughout this 12-month period. We seized a wealth of opportunities and advanced developments that fortified our leadership status and addressed sector performance.

Collaborative efforts have harnessed the potential of inland waterways to promote aquatic sport and participation, fostering a culture of community safety and well-being.

Our sector collaborations have also led to the development of new guidelines to support safe interactions with inland waterways and to engage multicultural communities. These guidelines will ensure an elevated commitment to safety and risk assessment, fostering positive aquatic experiences for all.

By strengthening our peak authority status, we continue to guide the sector towards improved aquatic safety, encouraging all to enjoy our waterways in a secure and responsible manner.

CASE STUDY

Inland Water Guidelines

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 Society – Australia.

The guidelines have been developed following a decade of research into drowning incidents in Australia's rivers, lakes, creeks, and other inland waterways, with over 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.



"Swimming is not just a journey across the length of the pool or the breadth of the sea, but a journey to better health, clearer thought, and shared joy."



B2

Maintain and Increase Strategies to Inform and Engage Stakeholders

Promoting safe and appropriate aquatic participation is a key objective for us. Through the implementation of innovative and varied strategies, we strive to communicate relevance and understanding across our diverse communities. We aim to provide meaningful, trustworthy solutions that actively engage our stakeholders, encouraging them to partake in aquatic activities responsibly and appropriately.

As our inland waterways become increasingly accessible and utilised for recreation and enjoyment, it is vital to educate our communities on the inherent risks and necessary safety measures associated with these environments. Our research has shown that certain demographic groups are at a higher risk of fatal or non-fatal drowning incidents in these settings, underlining the importance of broad education, risk awareness, and behavioural adjustment strategies.

Despite the challenges, we are proud to report a 48% decrease in drowning deaths among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals over the past decade. Notably, children aged 5 to 14 years have recorded the lowest number and rates among all age groups.

In partnership with our community allies, Royal Life Saving has made significant strides in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to address drowning prevention and develop water safety skills. We remain steadfast in our commitment to strengthen relationships with health agencies and community leaders to build community resilience, facilitate effective water safety and health promotion programs, and bridge gaps in knowledge.

To effect meaningful change and impact for Aboriginal communities across multiple areas, aligning our actions with relevant policies is crucial. As part of our commitment to this goal, Royal Life Saving has developed a Reconciliation Action Plan. This blueprint outlines our collaborative actions and responses, involving broader consultations and opportunities in the future.



CASE STUDY

RAP



Overview

As part of our commitment to water safety, we acknowledge the importance of swimming and water safety programs in reducing drowning and drowning-related incidents. To this end, we aim to foster stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the Tasmania, ensuring their needs are addressed and voices are heard.

Access and Opportunities

We recognise that access to swimming and water safety programs, coupled with employment opportunities in the aquatic industry, can bring social, health, and economic benefits to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We believe that designing programs with the community's input will yield more effective and sustainable outcomes.

As leaders in the Aquatic industry, we are committing to increasing the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and creating increased participation opportunities for communities.

Collaboration and Education

The Australian Water Safety Strategy identifies Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as a priority population group for swimming and water safety. It is a key priority for Royal Life Saving to improve collaboration, provide opportunities, continue water safety education, and learn from communities about waterways.

The Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

We are taking the first step towards developing deeper relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through the implementation of the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This is the beginning of a journey where Royal Life Saving will continue to take carefully considered and inclusive action.

We intend to form a RAP working group to drive these discussions and action areas. Alongside this, the group will focus on building a detailed internal communication strategy for staff to ensure these actions and values are implemented across the organisation.

Building Connections

Our strategy will involve a step-by-step process where appropriate consultation will be utilised as a part of our advisory group. We will work with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and organisational leaders. The RAP will serve as an opportunity to continue to broaden and deepen our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to create equal access and opportunities.

Royal Life Saving is committed to contributing to the goal of reducing drownings and promoting water safety education, especially among priority population groups. Our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is one significant step in this direction, and we look forward to strengthening these relationships and fostering inclusivity in our programs and employment opportunities.



B3

Increase Commitments to Research and Innovative Development

Investment in research is central to our mission, providing critical guidance and direction in prioritising agendas, identifying suitable solutions, and benefiting the community at large.

Our advocacy and policy work in the areas of drowning prevention and water safety is deeply embedded in meticulous research and analytical work. We pride ourselves on having a skilled research team that collaborates with key academic institutions and partners to generate high-standard reports, academic papers, and position statements.

Our research endeavours include compiling data on fatal and non-fatal drowning incidents and patterns, analysing the behaviours and attitudes of aquatic users, producing benchmarking reports on aquatic performance, and conducting evaluation studies on social, health, and economic factors related to the aquatic sector and the wider community.

This commitment to research and intelligence gathering at the national level has solidified our leading role in the development and publication of key strategic documents, including the Australian Water Safety Strategy 2030 and the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework. These guiding documents set the course for our national priorities moving forward.

Notably, 90% of fatal drownings in Tasmania involve adults. Understanding the causal patterns and issues that lead to these tragic incidents is of paramount importance to us. By identifying these patterns, we can devise solutions to reduce such incidents and create a safer aquatic environment for everyone.

CASE STUDY

National Research

Research Report Summary: Inland Waterway Drowning Incidents in Australia (2010-2021)

A recent study conducted by the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia has shed light on the extent of drowning deaths in inland waterways across the country. In the decade leading to 2021, over 900 people tragically drowned in these environments, accounting for more than a third of all drownings in Australia. Key findings and safety recommendations of this research are as follows.

Key Findings

Inland Waterway Drownings: Out of the total of 924 people who drowned in inland waterways, males constituted a worrying 80%.

National Parks and Conservation Areas: For the first time, the study detailed drowning deaths in these areas, with 5% of fatalities taking place here. Another 5% of drownings happened at waterfalls or swimming holes.

River Drowning Blackspots: The top 10 blackspots remained largely unchanged over the decade. The deadliest rivers for drownings were the Murray River (NSW, VIC, SA), Yarra River (VIC), Hawkesbury River (NSW), Murrumbidgee River (ACT), and the Swan River (WA).

Lake/Dam Drowning Blackspots: The top three locations for drownings were Lake Eildon (VIC), Lake Macquarie (NSW), and St Georges Basin (NSW).

Safety Recommendations

To curb these disturbing statistics, the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia recommends the following safety measures:

- Check conditions before entering the water
- Enter the water slowly, feet first
- Be cautious around crumbling riverbeds and slippery dam edges
- Avoid underwater obstacles (e.g., rocks, branches)
- Exercise care when walking on unstable or slippery riverbeds
- Refrain from crossing flooded waterways
- Avoid alcohol and drugs around water
- Wear a lifejacket when boating or using watercraft
- Always swim with a companion

The study emphasises the necessity for continuous water safety education and preventive measures, particularly focusing on high-risk groups and areas. Through ongoing efforts, it is hoped that the rate of these tragic and preventable incidents can be significantly reduced.



Research Report Summary:
The Implementation of National Swimming and Water Safety Framework and Benchmarks in Swim Schools

A new study reveals a significant underutilisation of the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework and Benchmarks among swim schools in Australia, highlighting a missed opportunity to improve water safety and swimming skills among children.

The research, commissioned by the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia and co-authored by John Summers, Penny Larsen, RJ Houston, and Dr Katrien Pickles, analysed survey responses from 45 organisations providing lessons to approximately 825,000 children annually.

Key Findings

Awareness vs Implementation: While 75% of the surveyed swim schools were aware of the Framework and Benchmarks, only 26% mapped their programs to both.

Balance in Teaching: Just 8% of schools were found to dedicate equal time to water safety and swimming stroke skills, despite this being a key recommendation.

Data Utilisation: Merely 14% of schools used data to track their students' achievement against the National Benchmarks.

Programs aligning with the Framework can offer balanced education in water safety, personal survival, and swimming skills, allowing for consistent assessments of children's abilities across different systems or over time. This uniformity in assessments aids in identifying gaps in children's skills and areas requiring program improvements.

Recommendations

The report suggests the following key recommendations:

Enhance Awareness: Improve swim school providers' understanding of the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework and Benchmarks, and their alignment with the Swim and Survive program.

Structured Data Collection: Implement a structured data collection project on the National Benchmarks to make broad assessments of Benchmark achievements across three age groups.

Support Older Age Group: Provide resources and support to teachers of the 13- to 17-year-old age group, thereby ensuring increased achievement of the Benchmarks in this demographic.

Improve Software Systems: Enhance the software system capacity for swim schools to accurately enter students' achievements against the benchmarks, thereby improving future data collection capabilities.

By effectively tracking and measuring children's achievement of the National Swimming and Water Safety Benchmarks, resources can be optimally allocated to the age groups and communities in greatest need. This will act as a significant advocacy tool, ensuring equitable distribution of funding and resources.



Research Report Summary:
National Aquatics Symposium Report

The official National Aquatics Symposium Report has been released, encapsulating the collective insights of 150 delegates over two days of intensive discussion. Hosted by the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia, the report details high-level summaries of each session and features graphic recordings to highlight the connection between discussion points and the scope of topics covered.

Key Highlights:

Universal Access to Water Safety Education: The symposium agreed to work collaboratively to ensure universal access to swimming and water safety education for all people living in Australia, aligning it to national benchmarks. Key strategies include expanding funding for swimming programs and implementing strategies that lower access barriers, especially for children who missed out during COVID-19 lockdowns and those at a higher risk of drowning.

Implementation of National Swimming and Water Safety Framework: The report calls for all relevant parties to align swimming and water safety curricula with the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework. This alignment would lead to evidence-based, high-quality water safety education and significantly reduce drowning incidents.

Strengthening Benchmark and Outcome Reporting: The symposium advocated for strengthening systems that track, report, and benchmark children's achievement of national swimming and water safety standards. This would allow for identification and addressing of gaps and reinforce the aquatic industry's role in drowning prevention.

Strengthening the Aquatic Workforce: Delegates agreed to enhance the aquatic workforce by attracting and developing talent while addressing sector-wide risks and opportunities. They proposed diverse initiatives such as promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, strengthening career pathways, supporting training and professional development, and improving safety, quality, and consistency across the sector.

Sustainable Aquatic Facilities for Communities: The report urges governments to develop a national strategy to address aging aquatic infrastructure and the need for new and upgraded facilities. It also encourages innovative and sustainable planning for the establishment of such facilities.

Finally, the report calls for collaborative effort from all stakeholders - governments, industry leaders, educators, and community members - to realize these strategic objectives and create a safer and more inclusive aquatic environment in Australia.

Innovative Solutions

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.

Priority

- Increased involvement in our community or education programs.
- Increased participation in our sporting and lifesaving 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 services.

C1

Maintain and Expand Education and Training Solutions

With our commitment to providing state-of-the-art education and training solutions across various sectors, we continue to uphold our status as a leading institution. Our core focus revolves around crafting solutions to tackle water safety priorities, bolster sector resilience, and prepare the community. We offer innovative solutions tailored to the diverse needs of our communities, employing flexible and modern methods to ensure relevance and appropriateness. We emphasize access, equity, and stakeholder satisfaction.

Despite the challenges encountered in the past year, Royal Life Saving has remained dedicated to granting communities access to high-quality education and training solutions. The upheavals in the sector in recent years have necessitated the delivery of top-tier programs and services to ensure that our communities are catered for by skilled and accredited sector employees. In FY 2022-23 alone, Royal Life Saving TAS fulfilled over **2,129 vocational outcomes**.

Recognising the transient nature of the aquatic sector workforce, we have broadened our offerings to include full qualifications which will be made available to sector employees in 2024. This strategic shift gives participants the opportunity to become "multi-skilled," increasing their appeal to potential employers and paving the way for management roles within the aquatic, sport, and recreation industries.

Throughout 2022-23, Royal Life Saving continued to support initiatives encouraging Australians of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities to engage in active aquatic pursuits. Our key educational solutions, such as Swim and Survive, remained popular and widely utilised by schools and pools across Tasmania.

CASE STUDY

Swim Teachers

The Royal Life Saving "Swim Teacher Course" has been a highlight for Tasmania with **91 candidates** completing the course in the past year.

In November a group of courageous participants from Queenstown, on the far West Coast of Tasmania braved the snow, wind and rain in order to gain their qualifications. Financial support from the West Coast Council helped these participants to take part in the course.

Having more qualified Swim Teachers in this remote location will increase access to vital swimming and water safety lessons for both the public education and private sectors, together with supporting Queenstown Amateur Swimming Clubs' Learn to Swim Program.

The Tasmanian Education Department conducts the Swimming and Water Safety Programs for the four public schools on the West Coast, whilst the two private schools provide learn to swim for their own students, having more qualified Swim Teachers will assist in increased participation in swimming and water safety for the West Coast communities.

"While water provides recreation and relaxation, it also holds potential risks. The key to safety is a blend of respect, awareness, and preparation."





CASE STUDY

Training Outputs

At Royal Life Saving TAS, we firmly believe in empowering our diverse communities with the knowledge and skills to confidently respond to incidents and emergencies. Our vocational training agenda plays a vital role in providing community members and sector professionals with the necessary skills, cultivating a community-wide readiness that can potentially save lives.

Furthermore, our training programs provide professionals within the aquatic sector with a comprehensive understanding of operational responsibilities within aquatic facilities. This knowledge base ensures that our facilities across the state are managed to the highest standard, optimising safety and efficiency for all users.

In addition to providing key skills training, Royal Life Saving TAS is committed to fostering career development pathways for sector professionals. By offering a clear route for growth and progression, we aim to not only attract but retain the best talent within the sector, enhancing the quality of service and safety provided at our aquatic facilities.

The year 2022-23 marked a significant milestone for our vocational training initiatives, recording noteworthy outcomes and further reinforcing our commitment to community safety and professional growth. We continue to focus on expanding our training programs, strengthening our communities, and supporting our sector professionals, confident that this investment will drive lasting, positive change throughout Tasmania.





2,129
Vocational outcomes issued
↓ **7.3%** from 21-22

91
New swim teachers accredited
↑ **18%** from 21-22

1,467
accredited in CPR & First Aid
↑ **8.9%** from 21-22

359
Pool Lifeguard accreditations
↑ **0.3%** from 21-22

CASE STUDY COMING SOON!

Online School Education

Royal Life Savings' revolutionary online water safety education modules, designed to provide essential life-saving skills for all age groups. These engaging modules take place in the picturesque setting of Bentley Shire, where you'll follow the adventures of the Millington and Patel families as they explore water safety.

Comprising nine sequential modules, this course is expertly aligned to the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework and the Australian Curriculum. The progressive nature of the modules ensures a steady learning curve, encompassing various aspects of water safety, from understanding potential hazards and risks to emergency response protocols.

Let's dive into the first module - "Water Safety at Home." Here, students explore the various water sources within their domestic and farm environments and learn to navigate them safely. By the end of this module, students will be able to identify safe and unsafe water environments and understand the necessary precautions to ensure safety.

Our modules are meticulously designed to fulfill key curriculum outcomes. For instance, Module 1 is linked to the following outcomes:

National Swimming and Water Safety Framework: Fundamental aspects such as identifying aquatic environments at or near home (H1), recognising hazards in these environments (H2), and understanding rules for safe behaviour (H3).

Australian Curriculum: Foundation and Stage 1 goals, including identifying actions that promote health, safety, and wellbeing (ACPPS006), exploring natural and built environments in the local community where physical activity can take place (ACPPS023).

These enriching modules are more than just lessons; they are an investment in safety and health, empowering students to make informed decisions around water environments. Join us in this engaging journey through water safety education, and let's create safer homes and communities together!

More information can be found at www.drowningprevention.org.au



C2

Implement Sport and Active Recreation Programs

We are committed to rejuvenating our sporting pursuits by providing a unique sporting option that builds on our swimming and water safety experiences. Our connections with the aquatic, education, and sporting sectors offer a distinct opportunity to expand and breathe new life into our sporting and active recreation endeavours. Our strategies have led to an increase in participation opportunities and promoted inclusion.

Sport and active recreation are crucial elements in rural, regional, and remote Australia. They unite communities, contribute positively to community identity, foster a sense of belonging and place, encourage social interaction and inclusion, and provide opportunities for physical activity, thus enhancing health and wellbeing outcomes.

In 2023-24, we plan to explore further expansion opportunities, including the implementation and support of online coaching and officiating programs and the increased roll-out of our Junior Lifesaver program. This will ensure the existence of future infrastructure and qualified individuals to support the program's implementation, further enhancing the impact and reach of our sport and active recreation programs.

CASE STUDY COMING SOON!

Junior Lifesaver

This exciting initiative, designed for children aged 6-14, encourages them to 'Get Wet, Have Fun, and Learn Lifesaving Skills' in a friendly, social, and healthy environment.

The Junior Lifesavers Program plays an instrumental role in Royal Life Saving's swimming and water safety pathway. It combines the skills of swimming, rescue, accident prevention, and emergency care into a series of events to test the overall ability of our young lifesavers, both in and out of the water. It's an engaging, affordable, and flexible program, offering numerous benefits for swim schools, aquatic facilities, and their members.

But more than just a swimming program, Junior Lifesavers is designed to build relationships, leadership, and initiative skills, which form the backbone of our future lifeguards and aquatic staff. It offers pathways for participants, parents, staff, and volunteers in coaching, officiating, team management, and competition. The program is a fantastic non-competitive offering for swimmers, and it aids in attracting diverse members to our aquatic community.



The Junior Lifesavers Program goes beyond just promoting water safety—it fosters community engagement, catering to a variety of participants, including multicultural, non-English speaking, Indigenous, and disadvantaged individuals.

During 2024, Royal Life Saving TAS will be engaging key aquatic partners to launch the Junior Lifesaver initiative.

C3

Maintain and Expand our Health and Community Education Developments

We are dedicated to supporting community priorities by collaborating with strategic organisations and partners to develop and implement novel strategies to address community water safety needs. Our focus remains on reaching out to those who are often overlooked, with the aim of ensuring that balanced water safety education is accessible to all. Our partnerships with research institutions facilitate the development of high-quality evidence-based platforms to guide our influence and priorities.

It is known that overseas visitors typically have less robust swimming skills and water safety knowledge compared to those who have grown up in Australia. With the recent increase in new residents from a variety of countries and cultures, it is essential to adapt our drowning prevention strategies to keep everyone safe around Australia's waterways.

On average, 274 people drown in Australia each year, with about one in four being born overseas. Most of these overseas-born deaths were men who drowned in rivers while swimming, often with alcohol being a significant risk factor. These trends mirror those of Australian-born individuals. However, our research reveals unique risk factors among people born overseas, highlighting the need for specific approaches to drowning prevention for different subgroups such as residents, overseas visitors, and international students.

Although the number of drowning deaths was highest among people from the United Kingdom and New Zealand, the drowning rates for migrant populations were highest among those born in Korea, Taiwan, and India (based on the population residing in Australia by country of birth).

This underscores the need for tailored water safety strategies targeting multicultural communities with clear, culturally sensitive, and educational messaging. This strategy should cater to overseas transient populations such as tourists, seasonal workers, or short-term business visitors, as well as new permanent residents and international students. One aspect of this targeted approach is to foster greater cultural diversity among those working in the aquatic industry in Australia, which can help engage multicultural populations.

CASE STUDY

0-5 Years

As an organisation, our utmost priority is the safety and wellbeing of the most vulnerable members of our community - our children. Early life is a phase of exploration and engagement, and it's during these formative years that children often have their first encounters with aquatic environments. These interactions, if not navigated correctly, can be fraught with danger and sometimes turn fatal.

Recognising this critical situation, we are committed to building robust actions, systems, and barriers that ensure the protection of our children. Supervision is not just important, it is paramount. We strive to be ever vigilant, ever present, ensuring our children's safety is never compromised when they interact with water.

We believe in proactivity rather than reactivity. To that end, our goal is not only to intervene when disasters strike but to prevent these situations from occurring in the first place. This proactive approach requires us to continually invest in the water skill acquisition of our children, preparing them with a skill set that will not only safeguard their lives but also equip them with a lifetime of fun, confidence, and enjoyment around water.

To this effect, we commit to expanding our training solutions, ensuring a strong network of highly skilled community members who can respond promptly and effectively to moments of need. We also vow to expand our education platforms, fostering a culture of aquatic safety from an early age.

We envision a future where our children are not just protected, but empowered. Where they are not just safe around water, but skilled, confident, and joyful in it. Ensuring this future is not just our mission, it is our responsibility.





SOLUTION COMING IN 2024!

The Waddles

Overview

In an ongoing mission to prevent drowning and promote water safety education, Royal Life Saving continues to forge partnerships with pre-schools across the state. This initiative targets children aged 3-5, and its impact extends beyond program delivery, fostering a collaborative approach to safety education.

Program Structure

Our partnership program offers pre-schools an all-inclusive subscription that grants access to educational materials and discounts on various services. Subscription includes:

- Access to our animations/videos
- Facilitator Guides
- Lesson Plans and Interactive Guides
- Activity Sheets
- Access to Online Pre-School Education Shop
- Quarterly updates, news, and information for Students, Parents, and Teachers
- Customised parent education resources
- Discounted Training Courses for Teachers.

The Waddles Program

One of the key programs under this partnership is the Waddles program, which focuses on educating parents and children about the risks associated with various waterways. Specifically, Waddles-Lakes and Dams aims to teach young children about the dangers around lakes and dams in an engaging way, equipping them with skills to recognise dangerous situations and stay safe.

The program unfolds through an interactive story about a family of ducks on a camping trip, with each duckling encountering different elements of danger at a lake or dam. The repeated message emphasises the need for adult supervision near water, reinforcing the tagline "Take care near lakes and dams. Have an adult close at hand."

Recognition and Continued Learning

Upon completion of the Preschool Water Safety Program, teachers can award participating children with a certificate, recognising them as 'Water Smart Kids.' This not only instils a sense of accomplishment in the children but also encourages their ongoing commitment to water safety.

Our partnership program with pre-schools across Tasmania highlights our commitment to fostering a culture of water safety from an early age. By integrating water safety education into pre-school curricula, we are better equipping the next generation with the skills they need to safely enjoy Australia's beautiful waterways.

CASE STUDY

Empowering Community

Royal Life Saving TAS continues to provide Learn to Swim for hundreds of young people in “Out of Home Care”. Now in the fifth year of funding from the Tasmanian State Government we are seeing these young people successfully taking part in school learn to swim programs, water safety programs and private aquatic recreation, with their carers and siblings. Whilst displaying such confidence and pride we are aware of the impact this program has had on family’s water safety knowledge both around the home and in, on and around our inland waterways. To witness the development and ongoing support for this program has been momentous. Thanks to the Tasmanian State Government for recognising the importance of this program.



C4

Maintain and Grow our Product Solutions

We believe in the power of partnerships with product suppliers that provide solutions and tools essential for the delivery of education and training solutions. Our commitment also extends to coordinating and delivering lifesaving devices across communities.

The ability to service our organisational customers relies on a supplier network that offers quality service and products. A mutual understanding of our client needs ensures that Royal Life Saving receives prompt service and customised solutions. Given that our products are often aligned with rescue and response scenarios, any underperformance can have critical consequences.

Royal Life Saving has forged several important supplier networks and partnerships that support our training, education agenda, and the aquatic industry.

The next 12 months present a range of new opportunities and plans to open up and utilise our rivers, dams, and lakes for swimming and recreation. This requires Royal Life Saving to broaden its product solutions to cater for the various site-specific and operational needs these venues require.

The implementation of Public Rescue Equipment (PRE) along our waterways is becoming increasingly noticeable. It is critical that the general public is informed and educated about their location and usage to ensure that any rescue attempts are undertaken appropriately. Royal Life Saving will implement a range of initiatives that will increase community understanding of these devices to ensure that inland water activities are conducted safely and according to best practice.

CASE STUDY

Public rescue equipment – an emerging issue

The problem of preventable fatalities and injuries in Australia's inland waterways is one Royal Life Saving TAS takes seriously. We realised the increasing recreational usage of these waterways was leading to an escalation in risk, particularly for certain vulnerable groups within the community who might lack appropriate knowledge and swimming ability.

The Solution

In response to the escalating risks, Royal Life Saving TAS will be broadly advocating and seeking support for the provision of Public Rescue Equipment (PRE) at various high-risk inland waterway locations. The premise of this intervention is straightforward – provide immediate access to essential life-saving equipment for public use in the event of a water emergency.

Implementation

Royal Life Saving TAS will seek to consult with local communities, assess risk profiles of various locations, and identify key spots where PRE would be most effective. The equipment being considered includes throw bags, life rings, and rescue tubes, which are easily utilised by untrained bystanders.

Outcomes and Impact

The provision of PRE across various sites in Tasmania will be instrumental in reducing the risk of fatal and non-fatal drownings. The initiative promotes faster response times to aquatic emergencies, enabling immediate action before professional help arrives.

The availability of PRE serves as a constant visual reminder to the public about the inherent risks associated with open water systems, thereby fostering an environment of safety consciousness. This helps in augmenting the broader education and awareness efforts by Royal Life Saving TAS.



C5

Maintain and Expand Aquatic Industry Services

As leaders in the planning and coordination of risk minimisation strategies, we work in close partnership with the aquatic and government sectors to provide high-level advice to aquatic practitioners. Our goal is to maximise the aquatic experience for the community while also helping to meet legislative and best practice demands.

Australia's public aquatic facilities generate substantial economic benefits for their patrons and the Australian healthcare system. Increased physical activity, primarily in the form of swimming and other aquatic exercises, contributes to significant health outcome improvements. Furthermore, these facilities offer Australians a safe environment to familiarise themselves with the water, with the support of lifeguards, clear visibility, and marked depths. This facilitates the development of aquatic survival skills in a low-risk environment, inspiring confidence in water before exposing individuals to more hazardous open water aquatic recreation. We actively encourage the provision and utilisation of suitable public aquatic facilities for all Australians, given the benefits they offer for exercise and improved aquatic safety.

On average, each Australian visits a public aquatic facility 4.4 times a year, leading to 106 million individual pool visits annually. The physical activity undertaken during these visits, including lap swimming, aquatic sports, learning to swim, and unstructured aquatic play, helps to boost visitors' physical activity levels.

Our Aquatic Risk Management Services also extend to supporting 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 provide a false sense of security for visitors. As inland waterways see dramatically increased visitation rates, it is critical to implement a range of strategies to reduce the risk of drowning at these locations.

The Royal Life Saving Inland Waterway Safety Assessment (IWSA) evaluates existing operational policies and procedures, emergency management plans, aquatic signage compliance, hazard identification, and access and egress points. It can provide landowners with a comprehensive improvement plan for implementation. By commissioning Royal Life Saving to undertake an IWSA, land managers adopt a proactive approach in determining appropriate risk mitigation actions to help prevent foreseeable loss of life and injury to local residents and visitors recreating in the aquatic environment.

CASE STUDY

Risk Management

In the field of Aquatic Risk Management, Royal Life Saving has distinguished itself as a specialist service provider since 1894. Our services focus on harnessing community strengths to mitigate aquatic related injuries and drownings. We strive to provide a multidisciplinary approach to manage aquatic venues and facilities effectively, aligning with evolving business management practices, legislative compliance, and industry best practices.

In the past year, we have supported numerous facilities in crafting risk management strategies, with dual objectives of loss prevention and the promotion of safety best practices for employees and customers. These comprehensive services form the backbone of successful and sustainable operations of any aquatic venue or facility.

Our extensive range of services caters to the varied needs of the ACT Aquatic Industry. We have consistently aimed to provide cost-effective solutions that maximise patron safety and promote safe aquatic environments.

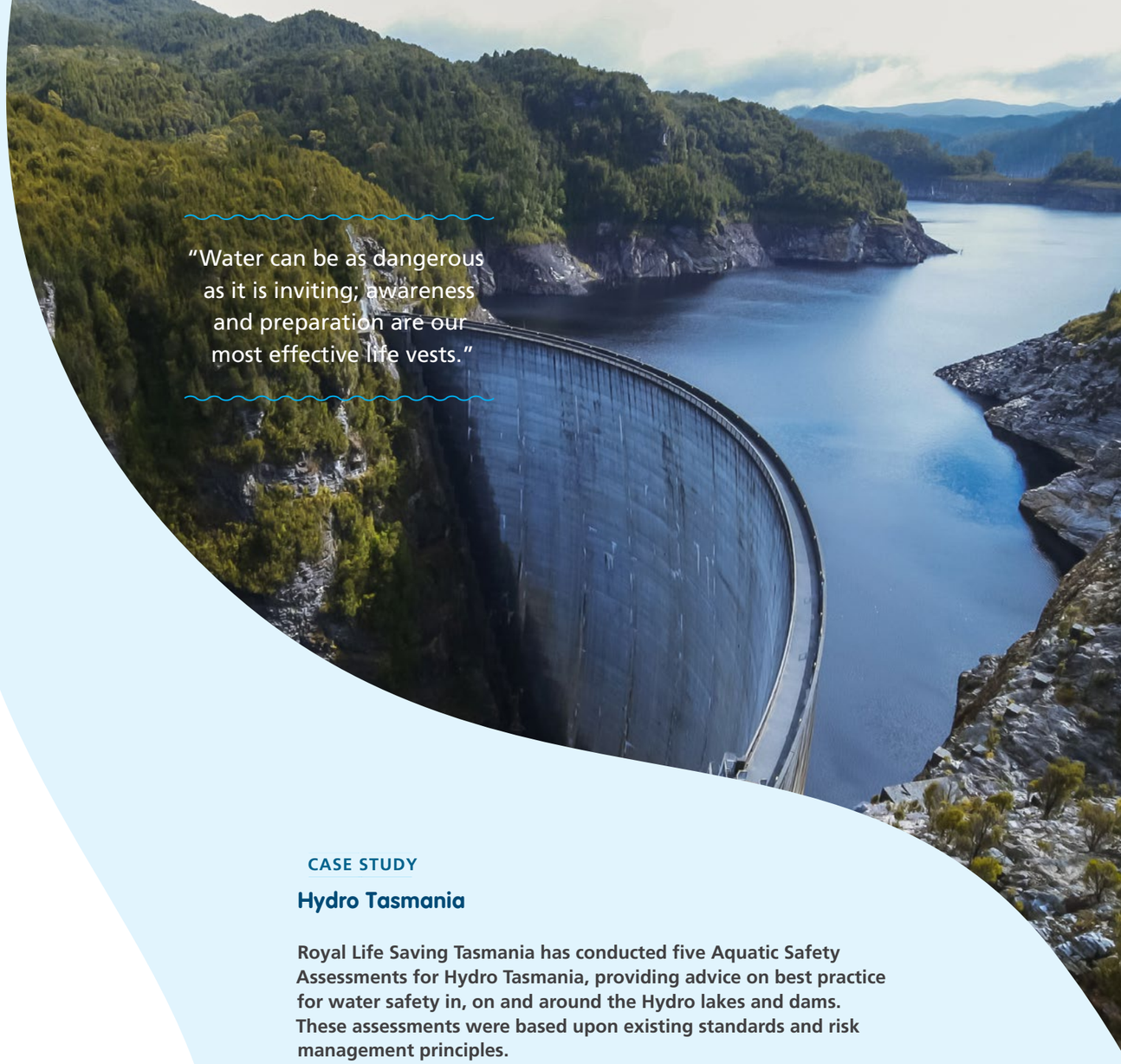
These services include:

- Local Water Safety Planning: Designed to customise safety measures according to the local needs.
- Safety Equipment: Provision of essential safety gear to ensure patron protection.
- Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment: Evaluation of the overall safety measures and procedures in place at aquatic facilities.
- Facility Design Assessment: Review of facility design from a safety and compliance perspective.
- Mystery Guest Assessment: Anonymously assessing the facility's adherence to safety protocols.
- Supervision Validation Assessment: Evaluating the effectiveness of supervision within the facilities.
- Signage Assessment: Checking compliance and effectiveness of safety and informational signage.
- Emergency Action Plans: Crafting robust emergency response strategies.
- Operations Manuals: Comprehensive guides for facility operation and safety procedures.
- Aquatic Consultancy: Expert guidance for aquatic facility management and safety protocols.
- Incident Investigation: Thorough exploration of incidents to improve future safety measures.
- Inland Waterway Safety Assessment: Ensuring the safety of activities in inland water bodies.

Through these services, Royal Life Saving continues its dedication to creating safer aquatic venues across Tasmania.

Achievements

- 4 x Public Pools under the Keep Watch @ Public Pool Programs.
- 4 x Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments were conducted with a Mean Compliance Score of 84%.
- 2 x in-service training sessions
- 2 x consultancy projects



CASE STUDY

Hydro Tasmania

Royal Life Saving Tasmania has conducted five Aquatic Safety Assessments for Hydro Tasmania, providing advice on best practice for water safety in, on and around the Hydro lakes and dams. These assessments were based upon existing standards and risk management principles.

Through our Aquatic Risk Services Team, we assessed Hydro's inland lakes and dams that are utilised by the local communities and visitors for recreational aquatic and land-based activities.

By conducting these Safety Assessments, we aim to mitigate potential loss and provide recommendations to ensure public safety in, on, and around Hydro Tasmania's inland waterways.

Royal Life Saving Tasmania thank Hydro Tasmania for the assistance provided in identifying the assessed sites, together with the Tasmanian State Government funding that has made these assessments possible.

People – Stability and 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.

Priority

- Increased community activations.
- Continued organisational stability through risk analysis and management.
- Maintain sustainable assets to service communities.
- Maintain a skilled workforce.
- Ongoing compliance with legislative requirements and organisational excellence.

D1

Advocate Water Safety Priorities across all Communities

As leaders in the planning and coordination of water safety initiatives, we are strategically positioned to effectively advocate across all communities.

At the heart of our efforts are the ground-level strategies. These are designed with a profound understanding of the needs and conditions of the communities we serve. By maintaining an emphasis on local engagement and grassroots initiatives, we ensure our programs are as effective and meaningful as possible.

Looking to the future, we are committed to furthering our advocacy work, bringing the crucial importance of water safety to an even broader audience. We understand that every community has unique needs, and our mission is to ensure that every individual, regardless of their location or background, understands the importance of water safety. This commitment is central to our ongoing efforts to reduce the number of preventable drownings and ensure safe and enjoyable aquatic experiences for all Australians.



CASE STUDY

Scottsdale Aquatic Centre

The provision of swimming and water safety solutions to children in Tasmanian communities is critically important. Tasmania, being an island state with a vast coastline, numerous rivers, and lakes, inherently places its inhabitants, especially children, near water. Thus, it is vital to ensure that young Tasmanians are equipped with the skills to stay safe in and around water.

Initiatives focused on swimming education and water safety can dramatically reduce the risk of drowning and water-related accidents. Moreover, such programs empower children with confidence, promote physical health, and foster a lifelong appreciation for the unique aquatic environments of Tasmania. The investment in teaching children how to swim and be safe in the water is an investment in their future and the overall well-being of the community.



D2

Deliver and Maintain Asset Management and Growth

At Royal Life Saving, we understand the importance of sound asset management of industry aquatic assets. The aquatic sector across Tasmania operates and maintain a variety of assets, all geared towards providing communities with unrestricted access to a range of programs and services.

These aquatic precincts serve diverse sectors, offering community development and industry innovation. They stand as centres of excellence, providing resources and services that are vital to the enhancement of water safety skills and knowledge.

As we look towards the future, we acknowledge the necessity of strategic planning to ensure maximum value and extended useful economic life of these assets. We are committed to supporting these assets to cater for the growing needs and to continue providing top-tier services to the community.

We will continue to strategically investigate the ongoing state of the sector to ensure the broader communities across Tasmania have genuine access to modern and appropriate public pools.



CASE STUDY



Research Report Summary
State of Aquatic Facility Infrastructure in Australia

A new report has assessed the state of aquatic facility infrastructure across the Australian community.

The report found that:

- The average Australian public pool was built in 1968.
- 500 (40%) of public pools will reach the end of their functional lifespan by 2030.
- $8 billion is needed to replace those 500 aging public pools.
- A further $3 billion will be needed to replace facilities ending their lifespan by 2035.

Aging public pools are predominantly servicing regional areas currently, who are inherently less likely to be positioned favourably to replace these assets when they expire shortly.

Additional findings include:

- 64% of all renewal or new aquatic facility construction is currently financed by local government in Australia.
- 77% of aquatic facilities in regional areas are publicly owned.
- 79% of aquatic facilities located in areas with the lowest SEIFA decile are publicly owned.
- 74% of aquatic facilities located in areas with the highest SEIFA decile are privately owned.
- Many regional Councils struggle to afford to maintain or replace swimming pools, and increasingly councils are considering closing their pools.
- Closing community pools is inherently very unpopular and consistently aggravates community sentiment and mobilises communities towards involvement in the political process.

This all means deliberate and considered action is needed to plan for the future aquatic infrastructure needs of Australia. The report identifies key options for consideration including:

- Working with the private sector to provide services beyond learn to swim so that they may be able to make privately owned facilities available for recreational, leisure and fitness swimming to the broader community.
- Exploring how schools might build and share their aquatic facilities.
- Encouraging and facilitating greater cooperation between councils.
- Exploring how sports clubs and associations who may seek the use of aquatic facilities might also consider collaborative approaches to the development of such facilities.

Royal Life Saving will seek to bring together the aquatic sector and government to understand the situation and explore new approaches and opportunities for the continued provision of publicly accessible aquatic facilities in Australia.

D3

Manage Organisational Risk and Sustainability

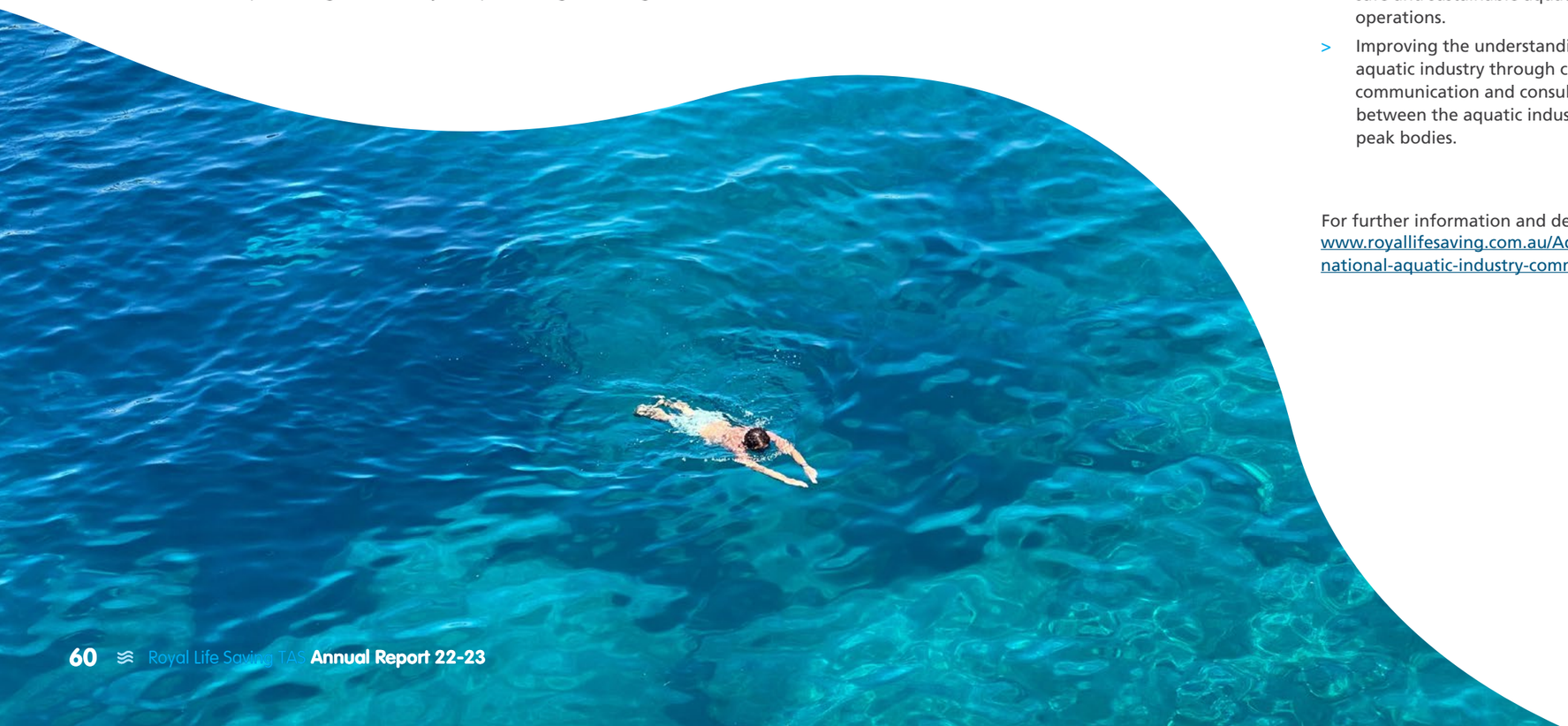
At Royal Life Saving, we are acutely aware of the intricacies and complexities inherent in the sector in which we operate. Our actions and strategies are shaped and influenced by a multitude of factors including government agendas, community needs, and broader sector trends.

As a not-for-profit organisation, we face unique challenges when it comes to adapting to consumer demand, maintaining sustainability, and staying competitive. We operate in an environment that is constantly changing and evolving. This means we must be agile, innovative, and proactive in our approach to risk management and sustainability.

Our approach to organisational risk management involves a robust process of identifying, assessing, and addressing potential threats. This could range from financial risks and operational challenges to external factors like changes in policy, sector trends, and community needs. We have implemented strategies to mitigate these risks and continue to refine our approach based on ongoing assessments.

Sustainability is another critical aspect of our strategic planning. We aim to ensure the longevity of our organisation, not only by securing financial stability but also by building strong relationships with stakeholders, fostering partnerships, and consistently delivering value to the communities we serve.

As we look towards the future, we are committed to ensuring that our strategies and plans align with governance expectations. Our goal is to make informed, justified decisions that will secure the long-term sustainability of Royal Life Saving and allow us to continue our important work in promoting water safety and preventing drownings.





CASE STUDY

National Aquatic Industry Committee

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.

For further information and details on the committee visit:
www.royallifesaving.com.au/Aquatic-Risk-and-Guidelines/Engagement-Events-and-Forums/national-aquatic-industry-committee



D4

Manage Workforce Acquisition, Skills, and Retention

Our sector people are critical to enable us to meet our mission. We believe in investing in a high-performing workforce that is committed to operational excellence, and continually strive to enhance systems and processes to achieve quality humanitarian outcomes.

Our approach to workforce acquisition and development involves supporting talented individuals who embody our community values, are passionate about water safety, and dedicated to serving our communities. We support professionals who can bring innovative solutions, and who possess the skills and knowledge needed to drive our collective objectives forward.

In terms of skills development, we are committed to the continual training and professional development of our sector workforce. We provide various opportunities for skills enhancement, from technical training in specific aspects of water safety to broader professional development opportunities. By doing this, we ensure sector employees are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills to effectively service the aquatic sector and meet the needs of our diverse community.

Looking forward, we will continue to refine our strategies in workforce acquisition, skills development, and retention to ensure we have the sector has the right people, with the right skills, in the right roles, delivering on our collective mission to prevent drownings and promote water safety across all communities.

CASE STUDY

Industry Workforce



National Aquatic Industry Workforce Report 2023

The national aquatic industry workforce comprises approximately 65,000 workers, a contraction since 2019. There was an estimated workforce shortfall of around 5,000 workers over the summer of 2022-23.

The report provides a comparison to the 2019 workforce profile, as well as data on the direct effects of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns on individual workers and the workforce generally.

Jackson, S., Houston, R., Pickles, K (2023). National Aquatic Industry Workforce Report 2023. Royal Life Saving Society – Australia. Sydney. The aquatic industry research of the Royal Life Saving Society – Australia is supported by the Australian Government.

The findings demonstrate that many of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns are still having ripple effects today, particularly the loss of skilled staff and ongoing staff shortages. It highlights where improvements can be made, for example in supporting and retaining staff, and building a more diverse workforce.

It also highlights where strengths can be harnessed, for example around flexibility of roles, high value employability skills, connection to local communities, and a genuine passion within the workforce for helping people to enjoy the water safely.

Key recommendations include:

- Encourage career pathways and support for workers to develop into higher roles in industry, particularly women.
- Recognise that workers in the aquatic industry want not just a job, but a lifestyle, connection and meaningful engagement.
- Develop incentives and strategies that attract and retain quality staff.
- Foster a workforce that is representative of the local community by actively seeking workers from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.
- Investigate, review and develop a nationally consistent workforce framework which captures and standardises approaches to professional development, reaccreditation and career development pathways.

Key findings include:

- More than half of the workforce (58%) are female although there is greater gender parity compared to 2019.
- One in every 25 workers (4%) identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Most workers draw satisfaction from making a positive impact on people's lives and the community and interacting with patrons and colleagues.
- Sixty-one per cent of workers perform more than one role in the aquatic industry.
- More than a third of workers think they will stay in their role for six or more years.
- Half of all pool lifeguards work seasonally.
- Students make up 60 per cent of the pool lifeguard workforce, and 61 per cent are under the age of 25.
- Fifty-five per cent of swimming and water safety teachers are over the age of 45 and one in four (25%) are under the age of 25.
- More work needs to be done to encourage gender parity in senior leadership roles, with only 44 per cent of centre managers being female.
- More work needs to be done to encourage multicultural communities to take up employment in the industry with fewer than 13 per cent of industry employees born overseas, in contrast to the 27 per cent of the population who are born overseas.
- More than one-third (34%) of the workforce work casually and just under half (43%) work 15 hours or less a week.
- The percentage of workers that work more than 23 hours a week has increased from 25 per cent in 2019 to 37 per cent in 2022. Forty-two per cent of workers that were employed in the aquatic industry during the COVID-19 lockdowns period were stood down and just under half received JobKeeper.
- Of those stood down, 27 per cent found employment in another industry.



D5

Meet Legislative and Organisational Compliance Requirements

At Royal Life Saving, we place utmost importance on operating within the framework of legislative and organisational compliance. We understand that our work is deeply intertwined with legal and regulatory standards, and we commit to upholding these requirements to the highest degree.

Our compliance strategies involve thorough monitoring and proactive management of legislative obligations. This involves regular reviews and updates to our operational procedures to reflect changes in laws and regulations related to our sector. By doing so, we not only meet legislative requirements but also incorporate best practices into our operations, further ensuring our commitment to integrity, quality, and safety.

In order to comply with organisational standards, we have a clear set of internal policies and procedures in place. These guidelines provide a comprehensive understanding of our organisational expectations and help us maintain a consistent and efficient operation across all areas. Compliance with these policies is enforced and reviewed regularly, with updates made as necessary to reflect our evolving needs and priorities.

We also place a high value on transparency and accountability. We regularly report on our compliance status to relevant stakeholders, including our staff, partners, and community, providing them with a clear view of our operations and our commitment to regulatory and organisational compliance.

By operating within these parameters, we ensure the integrity of our operations, reinforce the trust our community places in us, and continue to be a respected advocate for water safety across all communities.



CASE STUDY

Cybersecurity

Royal Life Saving recognises the increasing prevalence and sophistication of cyber threats and data breaches, and the far-reaching consequences they can have on our operations, reputation, and the trust of the communities we serve. As custodians of valuable and sensitive data, it is paramount that we prioritise the implementation of robust policies and processes aimed at cyber threat prevention, detection, and response.

These policies and processes are necessary for several reasons. Firstly, they are vital for protecting the confidential information of our customers, members, donors, and volunteers from unauthorised access, alteration, or theft. This includes personal identification information, financial data, and other sensitive details, the exposure of which could result in serious harm to individuals and to our organisation.

Secondly, these measures are critical in safeguarding our operational continuity. Cyber threats and data breaches can disrupt our vital life-saving services, training programs, and community initiatives, potentially putting lives at risk.

Thirdly, strong cybersecurity policies help protect our reputation and maintain public trust. As a respected organisation, any breach of our systems could erode the confidence placed in us by the government, community, members, partners, and regulators.

Lastly, having robust cybersecurity policies and processes is part of our legal and ethical obligations. Various regulations, such as the Australian Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act 1988, require organisations like ours to take reasonable steps to secure personal information against misuse, interference, and loss, as well as unauthorised access, modification, or disclosure.

The development and enforcement of comprehensive policies and processes to counter cyber threats and data breaches is an absolute necessity for Royal Life Saving. This commitment not only ensures the security and integrity of our data but also underpins the trust and respect we have earned from our members, partners, and the wider community.

To this end, Royal Life Saving is investing significantly in sophisticated cybersecurity infrastructure and employee education. We are committed to ensuring the highest level of security for our digital assets and are collaborating with leading cybersecurity firms to conduct regular audits, implement real-time threat detection mechanisms, and establish swift incident response measures.

In line with our commitment to transparency, we will periodically share updates about our cybersecurity efforts and keep our stakeholders informed of our progress. Furthermore, we will continually review our policies and practices to adapt to the ever-changing cybersecurity landscape, always striving to enhance our defences and stay a step ahead of potential threats.

Royal Life Saving views its commitment to cybersecurity as a fundamental aspect of its operations. The confidentiality, integrity, and availability of our information are critical to our mission, and the peace of mind of our members, donors, partners, and community. We are determined to do whatever it takes to uphold these values and protect our digital landscape.

CASE STUDY

Child Protection

Ensuring the safety and well-being of children is paramount to any organisation's values. However, the actualisation of child-safe practices is an ongoing task, and there is always room for improvement. The aquatic industry, in particular, can present specialised challenges in maintaining child safety.

In light of this, Royal Life Saving has developed two online child safety modules to support the industry and its workforce. These modules help users understand the legal requirements, expectations, and best practices relating to child safety.



Frontline Staff Module

Tailored for swim teachers, program instructors, pool lifeguards, and other staff who regularly interact with children. This module aims to equip learners with the knowledge and skills to discern appropriate and inappropriate conduct, identify abuse (including grooming behaviours), and understand their obligations in reporting abuse or suspected abuse. The module typically takes around 30 minutes to complete.



Management Staff Module

Specifically designed for leadership and management roles within the aquatic industry and roles requiring leadership in child safety, such as Child Safety Officers. This module covers the same content as the Frontline version but delves deeper into organisational level practices to cultivate a child-safe culture and effectively manage risks to children's safety. It generally takes around 45 minutes to complete.

In cases where categorising staff into Frontline and Management is unclear, we recommend taking the Management version. It covers the same content as the Frontline version and offers additional information. Any non-relevant content can be considered informational, allowing the learner to focus on the areas most pertinent to them.

Both modules are contextualised to the aquatic industry environment, incorporating various design elements, interactions, visual representations, scenarios, reflection tools, and knowledge checks to optimise engagement and learning.

Ultimately, these modules aim to provide industry professionals with the confidence and clarity to navigate the critical and sometimes complex aspects of their roles regarding child safety.

CASE STUDY

Child Protection Guidelines

During 2022-23 we were proud to announce the release of our newly developed draft Child Protection Guidelines, crafted to steer the industry through their legislative responsibilities. This development is a testament to the collective endeavour of the National Aquatic Industry Committee (NAIC), which is represented by over 20 organisations, councils, and legal representatives across Australia. We greatly appreciate their commitment to providing invaluable input and expert guidance.

The guidelines offer pragmatic guidance for owners or operators of aquatic facilities, outlining necessary measures to protect children and young people from any form of abuse or related harm. This protection is essential not only within the confines of an aquatic facility but also extends to programs and services delivered by the facility, or by a third-party organisation in association with the facility. It also covers formal aquatic programs and services delivered by a person or organisation outside of an aquatic facility.

We believe these guidelines will foster a safer and more inclusive environment for our young participants, ensuring that their safety and well-being remain our utmost priority. Through these measures, we aim to uphold the integrity of our industry and further cultivate a culture of safety, respect, and protection for all.





03 / Our Celebrations

Honours

Royal Life Saving deeply appreciates and acknowledges the tireless efforts and invaluable contributions of the numerous individuals, organisations, and entities who dedicate themselves to promoting the ideals of water safety and lifesaving. These invaluable partners share our mission, working relentlessly in the face of challenges and extending their support in various capacities, be it through financial aid, provision of resources, volunteering, or sharing expertise.

Year after year, their efforts play a crucial role in helping us accomplish our objectives, reach out to more communities, and create a safer and more inclusive aquatic environment for all. Their commitment goes beyond simple contributions; they are the lifeblood of our cause, shaping our journey and reinforcing our mission.

In recognition of their outstanding contributions and relentless pursuit of our shared objectives, we honour them through our Honors System. This system is designed to acknowledge and celebrate their significant impact and the difference they make in the lives of countless people.

The honour is not merely a token of appreciation, but a testament to their dedication and commitment to our cause. By recognising their efforts, we hope to inspire others to join us in our mission and further the reach of our lifesaving work. We remain forever grateful to our honourees for their unwavering support and shared vision of a safe and engaging aquatic environment for all.

Commonwealth Honours

Vice President

Sir Basil Osborne, CBE
Doug Plaister, AO MBE

Life Governor

Sir Basil Osborne, CBE
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP

Life Member

Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP
Gary Kearney

Service Cross

Nigel Carins
Mark Chandler
Mark Hayes
Gary Kearney
Alison McIntyre
David Mourant
Sir Basil Osborne, CBE
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP
Mark Hayes

First Bar to Service Cross

Gary Kearney
David Mourant
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP

Second Bar to Service Cross

Doug Plaister, AO MBE

Third Bar to Service Cross

Doug Plaister, AO MBE

Service Medal

Zearust Abbott
Judi Adams
Mark Barling
J William Brain
Vanessa Brown
Nigel Carins
Mark Chandler
Cynthia Craw
Roslyn Dillon
Geoffrey Frier
JJ Gardner
Peter Goss
R Mark Hayes
Dianne Hollister
Joseph Ingles
Judy Jessup
Gary Kearney
James Lyons
Dianne McHenry
Alison McIntyre
Amanda Mayes
Natalie Meldrum
Margaret Miller
David Mourant
Richard Penwright
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
R Barry Plaister
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Pamela Roberts
Noel Ruddock AM
Selby Simpson
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP
Anne Thwaites
Brian Webb
Ceri Weeks

Bar To Service Medal

Zearust Abbott
William Brain
Nigel Carins
Mark Chandler
Roslyn Dillon
Peter Goss
R Mark Hayes
Gary Kearney
Margaret Miller
David Mourant
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
Noel Ruddock
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP
BV Webb
Amanda Mayes

Honorary Associates

Rev Brother TG Addicoat
Barbara Baker
Betty Baker
Rev Brother N Baker
M Church
H Clennett
P Collins
Donald Ebsworth
LJ Elridge
Peter Fehre
Geoffrey Frier
M Goss
N Goss
Thomas Howard
Joseph Ingles
Frank Jenkins
DR Lewis
Donald McDonald
B McKittrick
H Meredith
Ronald Millington
Margaret Miller
David Mourant
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
R Barry Plaister
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Noel Ruddock AM
AA Rundle
Geoffrey Templeman
B Valentine
Donald Wicks

Diploma Holders

Barbara Baker
Betty Baker
Barbara Brain
Walter Bridley
Patricia Burbury
Dorothy Flinn
Steven Foley
Suzanne Geeves
Phillip Keam
Thomas Simpson
Roslyn Walsh
Paul Webb
Robyn Pryce-Jones

Australian Honours

Senior Governor
Sir Basil Osborne, CBE
Doug Plaister, AO MBE

Life Membership
Gary Kearney
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP

Meritorious Service Medal
Barbara Brain
Anne Burrows
Nigel Carins
Joseph Ingles
Gary Kearney
Alison McIntyre
Margaret Miller
David Mourant
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Noel Ruddock
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP

Companion
Nigel Carins
Mark Chandler
Peter Goss
Diane Hollister
Gary Kearney
ianne McHenry
Alison McIntyre
David Mourant
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP

Fellow
Peter Goss
Dr Paul Luckin
Dianne McHenry
Mark Chandler
R Mark Hayes

Associate
R Mark Hayes
Jennifer Mazengarb
Natalie Meldrum
Ann Walker
Ceri Weeks
Penny Snashall

Australian Service Medal
Neryl Mills

Australian Resuscitation Club
Kate Chambers

Tasmanian Honours

Vice Presidents
George Brothers
Patrick Chu
Francis Loo
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
Maxwell Robinson AO QPM
DH Tribolet
LE Weidenhofer
Sir Alfred White

Life Governors
Patrick Chu
Lyell Dowding
Henri Kwok
Francis Loo
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
Laurie Salmon
Vincent Shaw OAM

Life Members
Mark Chandler
Patrick Chu
Gary Kearney
Henri Kwok
Francis Loo
David Mourant
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Vincent Shaw OAM
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP

Meritorious Service Badge
Zearust Abbott
Judi Adams
TG Addicoat
J Aschman
Betty Baker
Mark Barling
Ralph Barnes
Janet Bean
Barbara Brain
Vanessa Brown
Anne Burrows
Nigel Carins
David Chambers
Mark Chandler
H Clarke
Betty Clennett
BY Chiu
Graeme Cooksey
Sue Cooksey
Lindy Crack
Patrick Chu
Roslyn Dillon
K Edwards
Frederick Eiszele
Peter Fehre
Peter Fox
JJ Gardner
Suzanne Geeves
Russell Goonan
Peter Goss
Alan Goodfellow
Judy Gould
Katherine Greenwood
Kathy Hawkes
Mark S Hayes
R Mark Hayes
Andrew Herbert
Robert Hill
Diane Hollister
Christopher Holloway
Robin Hood
Thomas Howard
Di Hunt
Sister Ignatius
Joseph Ingles
Frank Jenkins
Alan Jolly
Gary Kearney
Donald Keating
Henri Kwok
Phillip Large
YW Law
TS Leung
Francis Loo
Dr Paul Luckin
James Lyons
Amanda Mayes
P McDonald
Jennifer Mazengarb
Donald McDonald
Dianne McHenry
Alison McIntyre
B McKittrick
Natalie Meldrum
Margaret Miller
Neryl Mills
William Mills
Rowen Morphett
David Mourant
Debra Norris
Camille O'Meara
Sir Basil Osborne, CBE
Tracey Parry
Betty Parssey
D Payton
Suzanne Peacock
Richard Penwright
Doug Plaister, AO MBE
R Barry Plaister
Russ Porter
Robyn Pryce-Jones
Howard Richardson
A John Rigby
Pamela Roberts
Dennis Robertson
Noel Ruddock
Daphne Saarman
Vincent Shaw OAM
Pene Snashall
Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP
Alma Swinton
KC Tam
Geoffrey Templeman
Anne Thwaites
N Vaughan
Kye Vincent
Gerald Viney
Ann Walker
Brian Webb
Ceri Weeks
Sir Alfred White
Pamela White
Sue Wragge
Patrick Yeung

Tasmanian Trophies

D.M. Luckin Memorial Trophy

Outstanding service across an extended period.

1994 Alan Swinton OAM, QPM, JP
1995 Nigel Carins
1996 Gary Kearney
1997 David Mourant
1998 Alison McIntyre QPM, JP
1999 Robyn Pryce-Jones
2000 Diana McHenry
2001 Peter Goss
2002 Mark Chandler
2003 R Mark Hayes
2004 Jennifer Mazengarb
2005 Jill Bell
2006 Sue Wragge
2007 Suzanne Peacock
2008 Judi Adams
2009 Neryl Mills
2010 Alan Swinton OAM,
2011 Amanda Mayes
2012 Andrew Herbert
2013 Ceri Weeks
2014 Gary Kearney
2015 Anne Burrows
2016 Mark Chandler
2017 Amanda Mayes
2018 Pene Snashall

Dr. P. G. Luckin President's Trophy

Exceptional service across a 12-month period.

1997 Vanessa Brown
1998 Lorraine Brown
1999 Russell Goonan
2000 Alison McIntyre
2001 Jamie McIntyre
2002 Kate Mirowski
2003 Alison McIntyre
2004 Neryl Mills
2005 Amanda Mayes
2006 Rowan Morphett
2007 Kate Harland
2008 Vaughan Smith
2009 Camille O'Meara
2010 Julia Fassina
2011 Tracey Parry
2012 Tracey Parry & Neryl Mills
2013 Carolynn Taylor
2014 Amanda Mayes
2015 Pene Snashall
2016 Mel Bush
2017 Anne Burrows
2018 Gary Kearney





Royal Life Saving Tasmania

Address 4 Franklin Street
Lindisfarne TAS 7015

PO Box PO Box 112
Lindisfarne TAS 7015

Tel (03) 6243 7558
Web drowningprevention.org.au

ABN: 18 340 694 038