

2011/2012 VICTORIAN DROWNING REPORT

Life
Saving
Victoria





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- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Coroners Prevention Unit, Coroners Court of Victoria
- Emergency Management Programs and Resources, Police and Emergency Management, Department of Justice
- National Coroners Information System
- Royal Life Saving Society Australia
- Surf Life Saving Australia
- Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit, Monash Injury Research Institute, Monash University

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COMPILED BY

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Dr Bernadette Matthews is a Research Scientist with extensive experience in drowning and aquatic-related injury research. Her experience spans research on injuries in public swimming pools, epidemiology of fatal and non-fatal drowning, recall and recognition of aquatic safety signage, through to, evaluation of major public awareness campaigns.

Dr Matthews commenced working at Life Saving Victoria in 2005, as Manager, Research & Injury Prevention. Her numerous publications include eight annual drowning reports along with national and international peer reviewed journal articles. She has also provided submissions on behalf of LSV to coronial enquiries and has served as an expert witness on drowning cases.

37

**drowning deaths in Victoria from 1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012,
an increase of 3 deaths compared to 2010/2011.**

METHODS

This report includes unintentional fatal and non-fatal drowning incidents. An overview of fatal drowning for 2011/2012 is provided and compared with the 10 year average from July 2001 to June 2011. Detailed information on the incidence of both fatal and non-fatal drowning in Victoria from July 2001 to June 2011 has been used to provide a broader picture drowning in Victoria.

Fatal incidents

Information on fatal drowning incidents was collected from the Coroners Court of Victoria, and the National Coroners Information System (NCIS). Deaths due to natural causes, suicide, or homicide are excluded from this report.

Coronial information relates to both open and closed cases. While all care is taken to ensure that the results are as accurate as possible, these figures are provisional only and the report contains drowning deaths known as at 17 September 2012.

Coronial investigations and findings relating to open cases may alter the reported drowning figures. At the time of compilation 19% of suspected drowning cases in 2011/2012 remained open on the NCIS.

Non-fatal incidents

Information on non-fatal drowning was provided by the Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit (VISU). Data included non-fatal and immersion related injuries extracted from the Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset (VEMD) and Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset (VAED) for the period July 2001 to June 2011.

The VEMD is a dataset containing records of emergency department presentations in 38 Victorian hospitals with 24-hour emergency services. The VAED is a record of all hospital admissions in the state of Victoria. Deaths were excluded to avoid an overlap with Life Saving Victoria fatal drowning data.

OUR PERFORMANCE

Every day, visitors to Victoria's 811 kilometres of ocean beaches, 259 kilometres of bay beaches, 85,000 kilometres of rivers, 13,000 natural wetlands and 450 public and commercial swimming pools, engage in a wide variety of recreational aquatic activities (Short, 1996; DSE, 2011; VAIC, 2001). Our prevention efforts span this setting.

REDUCE DROWNING

Reduce Victorian drowning rate

37

Drowning deaths in Victoria from 1 July 2011- 30 June 2012, an increase of 3 deaths compared to 2010/2011.

\$139M

Direct cost to society of lives lost (where the value of a statistical life is estimated at \$3.75 million; Office of Best Practice Regulation, 2008).

0.66

Crude drowning rate per 100,000 population.

25%

Decrease in the drowning rate in Victoria from the 10 year average (2001-2011).

SERVICES

Expand to meet public need/ sustainability/ membership development, growth and support

815

Rescues by lifesavers and lifeguards on patrolled beaches on average per year from 2001-2011.

1,813

First Aid cases attended to by lifesavers and lifeguards on patrolled beaches on average per year from 2001-2011.

145,000 HOURS

Lifesavers volunteered in 2011/2012 to patrol beaches.

\$235M

Total value of coastal lifesaving services in Victoria estimated per year (PwC, 2011).

PROGRESS

Progress is tracked against drowning prevention priority areas in the Victorian Water Safety Master Plan and Australian Water Safety Strategy, 2012-2015.

| KEY LIFE STAGES | BASELINE 3 YEAR AVERAGE (2004-2007) | FOLLOW-UP 3 YEAR AVERAGE (2009-2012) | PROGRESS |
|------------------------------|---|--|-------------|
| Children 0-4 years | 4 | 4 | Work needed |
| Children 5-14 years | 4 | 3 | Work needed |
| Young people 15-24 years | 5 | 5 | Work needed |
| People aged over 55 years | 13 | 10 | Work needed |



EDUCATION & TRAINING

Continue development to ensure efficiency and expansion of delivery

209,000

Participants took part in water safety education state wide. This is a 33% increase compared to the 5 year average (2006-2011).

10,200

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) participants took part in LSV programs in 2011/2012. This is a 131% increase compared to the 5 year average (2006-2011).

28,600

People trained in CPR or participated in Child and Infant CPR or other First Aid related courses. This is a 34% increase compared to the 5 year average (2006-2011).

120

Aquatic facilities are registered Watch Around Water facilities, an increase of 41% from 2010/2011.

AQUATIC RISK & RESEARCH

Striving for excellence/ evidence based practice

104

Non-fatal drowning incidents (hospitalisations) on average per year from 2001-2011.

336

Drowning related out-of-hospital cardiac arrests were attended by paramedics between October 1999 and December 2011[^].

2.00

Crude hospitalisation rate of non-fatal drowning victims per 100,000 population.

76

Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments conducted auditing against the best practice standards set out in the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation. This is a 36% increase compared to the 5 year average (2006-2011).

| HIGH RISK LOCATIONS | BASELINE 3 YEAR AVERAGE (2004-2007) | FOLLOW-UP 3 YEAR AVERAGE (2009-2012) | PROGRESS |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Rural and remote | 23 | 18 | On track |
| Inland waterways | 12 | 14 | Urgent work needed |
| Coastal waterways | 14 | 13 | On track |

| HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES | BASELINE 3 YEAR AVERAGE (2004-2007) | FOLLOW-UP 3 YEAR AVERAGE (2009-2012) | PROGRESS |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Alcohol related | 9* | 10** | Urgent work needed |
| At Risk Communities: | | | |
| CALD Communities | 7 | 4 | On track |

* Average from 2000-2008; ** Current Year 2011/2012

[^] Findings from collaborative research with Ambulance Victoria (Dyson et al, 2012).

IMPACT OF DROWNING PREVENTION STRATEGIES ON THE DROWNING RATE 1997-2012

MESSAGES

1998/1999

- Launch of Play it Safe by the Water media campaign:
- Never take your eyes off
- Check it's OK to swim
- Swim between the flags
- Campaign translated into 10 multicultural languages

2001/2002

- New boating TVC
- Introduction of mobile billboards on Victorian roads

2003/2004

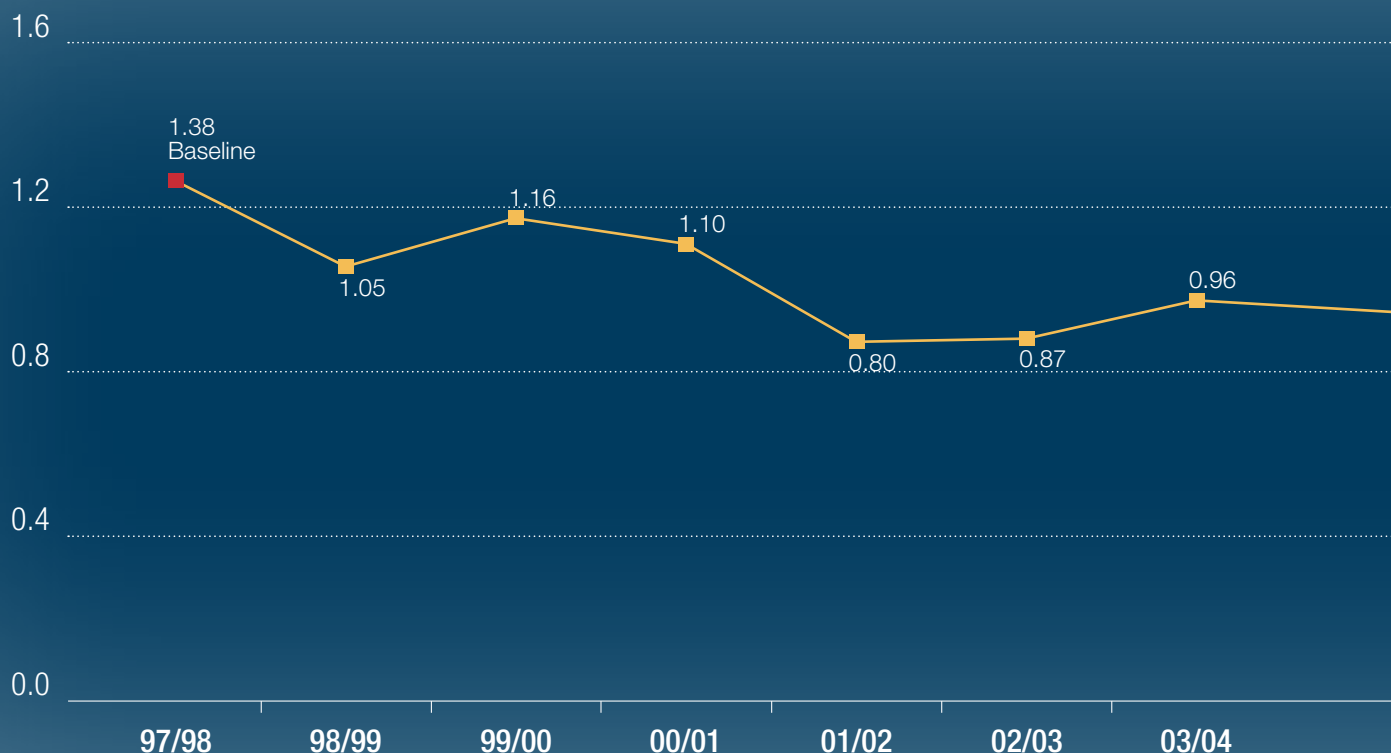
- Who's looking out for you?
- Campaign translated into 15 multicultural languages
- New advertising campaign launched

2004/2005

- Play it Safe, take your mates
- 16 multicultural ambassadors trained

VICTORIAN DROWNING RATE 1997-2012

DROWNING DEATHS PER 100,000 PEOPLE VICTORIA



ACTIVITY

1998/1999

- Campaign Begins: 27 November 1998
- Sink or Swim booklet sent to all Victorian households
- Water Safety Week begins
- Primary Education Kit sent to all primary schools
- Website launched
- Signage placed at airports

1999/2000

- Open Water Classroom Kit sent to all secondary schools
- Premier's Victorian Water Safety Certificate launched
- Open Water Learning Experience launched
- Swimming Pool and Spa Safety working party established to tackle increase in toddler drowning deaths

- Learn CPR/The Key to Survival program launched to provide free CPR training
- Principle agreement of Victoria's lifesaving associations to work toward becoming one organisation

2000/2001

- Aquatic Risk Management CD developed for facilities
- All Victorian public swimming pools assessed using Swimming Pool Safety Assessment System
- Guidelines for water safety in Residential Water Developments released

2001/2002

- Aquatic & Recreation Signage Manual launched
- Toddler Initiative begins following spike in toddler drowning deaths

- Introduction of full time aerial surveillance at Victorian beaches
- Introduction of Beach to Bush schools education program
- Trial of new lifesaving services during Schoolies Week at Lorne, Torquay and Phillip Island

2002/2003

- Changes in backyard pool legislation
- Life Saving Victoria interim board established, new organisation to become part of emergency services under Department of Justice
- Installation of new Standardised coastal water safety signage
- Trial of inland water safety signage

2003/2004

- Introduction of Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter service
- Introduction of 'Air to Life' program to teach primary school students basic resuscitation and first aid techniques



2005/2006

- Media roadshow promotion of water safety week begins

2006/2007

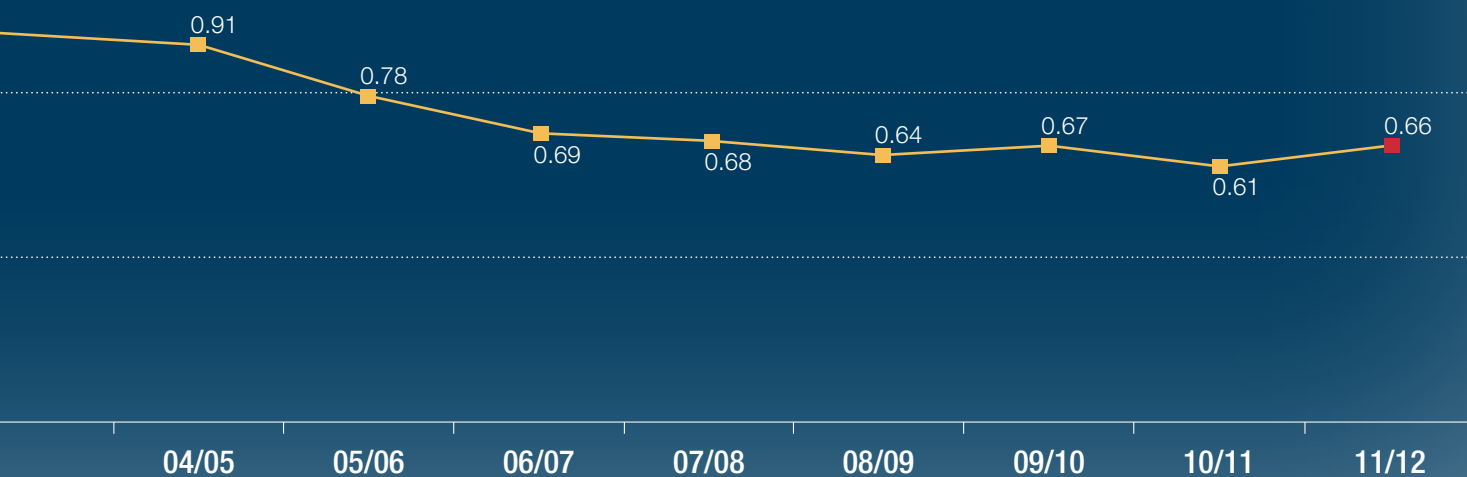
- Don't put your life on the line
- Rock fishing campaign launched

2007/2008

- New campaign messages: Never swim alone
- Look before you leap
- Always watch them around water
- Never turn your back
- Campaign translated into 18 multicultural languages

2009/2010

- New toddler TVC – 20 Seconds is all it takes for a toddler to drown



2004/2005

- Swim Safe Roos campaign launched with North Melbourne (Kangaroos) Football Club, to target risk takers
- Introduction of Boating Safety for Kids schools program
- Extensive review of drowning incidents in Victoria 2000-2004
- Public pool injury surveillance study conducted
- Introduction of Meet a Lifeguard program

2005/2006

- Endorsement of Aquatic and Recreational Signage Style Manual as national standard
- Launch of Platinum Pool Award encouraging best practise in aquatic facilities

- New water safety guidelines developed for body corporates and hotels/motels/caravan parks and camping grounds
- Changes in boating legislation

2006/2007

- Air to Life program modified to become new Resuscitate a Mate program
- Introduction of Water Connections multicultural water safety program for residents in the City of Hume

2007/2008

- Introduction of Lakes Entrance Indigenous Aquatics Project
- Learning for Life project initiated to fund learn to swim lessons for multicultural children

- Watch around Water program introduced to encourage parental supervision of children at public pools

2008/2009

- Indigenous Program expanded
- Introduction of pain management medication at high incident lifeguard sites
- Trial of midweek twilight lifesaving patrols

2009/2010

- Water Safety CD ROM sent to primary schools
- Introduction of public anaphylaxis training course
- Alcohol-related drowning research conducted

2010/2011

- Extension of Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter to year round response service and introduction of second helicopter for peak summer period
- Introduction of Port Phillip Bay Rigid Inflatable Boat Service
- Revamped Swim and Survive Program launched

2011/2012

- Launch of Victorian Water Safety Master Plan 2012-2015
- Launch of the Water Safety App for smartphones
- Launch of LSV from Anywhere initiative

144

**drowning deaths and
hospitalisations on average
per year from 2001-2011**





I COMMEND TO YOU LIFE SAVING VICTORIA'S DROWNING REPORT FOR 2011/ 20 12. FOR MANY YEARS NOW, THIS REPORT HAS BEEN A KEY DOCUMENT IN INFORMING OUR STRATEGIES AROUND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF WATER SAFETY SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND CAMPAIGNS, TO PREVENT DROWNING INCIDENTS IN VICTORIA.

Through the Victorian Water Safety Master Plan, launched in December 2011, LSV continues to engage the Aquatics Industry, Government and the wider community in water safety initiatives to target key drowning risks in Victoria.

Following our record low of 34 drowning deaths in Victoria in 2010/11, we have seen a 9% increase in drowning deaths this year, up to 37. As we well know, drowning incidents are largely preventable and this increase serves as a saddening reminder that we must all remain vigilant when it comes to water safety.

A key feature of this year's report is the introduction of non-fatal drowning statistics, which help paint a fuller picture of the enormity of drowning incidents in Victoria over a 10 year period. We note our appreciation of the work by the VISU in this area of activity. This data reveals that there were over 1000 hospitalisations as a result of non-fatal drowning in Victoria from 2001-2011.

On average, there were 144 drowning deaths and hospitalisations per year from 2001-2011.

When we think of water hazards and dangers, beaches and pools are often top of mind. However, it is noted in this year's report that more than half of all drowning deaths in Victoria (54%) occurred in inland waterways.

With more flooding across the north and west of Victoria early in 2012, we commend the Victoria State Emergency Service on its community education and confronting advertising campaign targeting flood water safety. This campaign provides another example of Community/ Government partnerships.

However, more commonly than not, drowning deaths in inland waterways occur during recreational activities, and this is an area which requires urgent attention to address and prevent future drowning deaths.

We have also seen an increase in infant and toddler drowning deaths in 2011/12, compared to 2010/11. We are still seeing the most common drowning locations for under 5s around the home and home swimming pools, highlighting the importance of adult supervision wherever there is water present in the home.

Males remain four times more likely to drown than females. Alcohol also continues to be a key risk factor; in 10 drowning deaths cases this year, alcohol was reportedly consumed by the individual prior to drowning. These deaths represent more than a quarter (27%) of all drowning deaths in Victoria in 2011/12, which is of great concern.

Our report this year includes a summary of the Community/ Government partnership over the last 14 years, paired with an analysis of the Victorian drowning trend over the same period. This representation shows the impact the campaign has had on the Victorian community, showing a clear and continued downward trend in the drowning toll.

While on this note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cathy Acocks and Carina DeSilva from the Department of Justice, who have each made a significant contribution to the campaign over many years. Cathy has been an integral part of the Play it Safe by the Water campaign since its inception in 1998, while Carina has been involved since 2000. The pair will be greatly missed as they leave their positions at Department of Justice. To Cathy and Carina, thank you for your outstanding efforts and continued dedication to water safety. The results of your work are clearly shown in this year's drowning report and I hope you both take pride in these achievements.

As we approach the summer season, I remind all Victorians to put safety first, when in, on and around water.

Every drowning death is one too many, and it is our mission to continue to engage industry, government and the community in reducing drowning in Victoria.

Nigel Taylor ESM

Chief Executive Officer
Life Saving Victoria



A young boy is captured in a dynamic splash of water, his arms raised in a 'V' shape, suggesting a joyful or triumphant moment. The water is a vibrant blue-green, with numerous white bubbles and droplets surrounding him. The background is a deep, dark blue, making the boy and the splashing water stand out prominently.

600%

increase in the drowning rate
of the 5-14 year age group
from the 5 year average

WHO IS DROWNING?



GENDER

Males remain four times more likely to drown than females. Of the 37 drowning deaths in Victoria, 78% (29) were male and 22% (8) were female.

AGE

Children aged 0-4 years and adults aged over 60 years have the highest age-specific drowning rates. This year 3 children aged 0-4 years and 9 adults aged over 60 years drowned in Victoria.

There was a decrease in the drowning rate per 100,000 population across all age groups in 2011/2012 compared with the 10 year average (2001-2011), except in 15-24 year olds, which increased by 15% (0.78, 2011/2012 compared with 0.68 from 2001-2011). The drowning rate of 15-24 year olds had trended downwards in recent years (from the 2001-2006 five year average).

There was also a decrease in the drowning rate in each age group from 2006-2011 compared with 2001-2006, except the 5-14 year age group. This age group saw a 68% increase in the 5 year average drowning rate in 2006-2011 compared to the 5 year average rate for 2001-2006. The drowning rate of 5-14 year olds is now similar to that of 15-24 year olds.

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

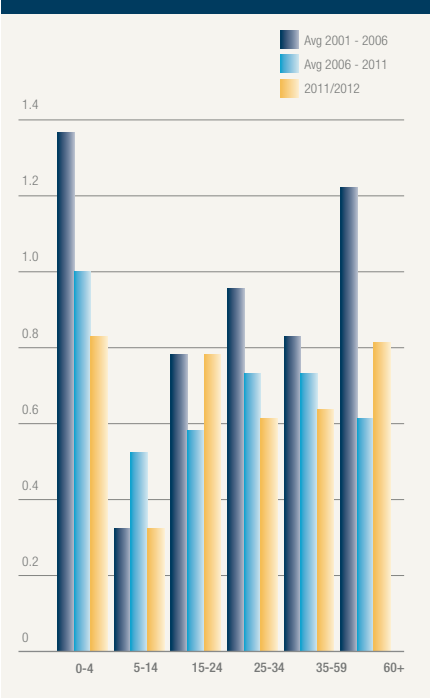
This year 4 (14%) individuals were reported as being from CALD communities, however the cultural background of 28 (76%) of those who drowned was unknown. This is consistent with previous years, with data from the NCIS, Victoria Police, Coroners Court of Victoria, the media and local communities indicating that 13% of drowning deaths in Victoria from 2001-2011 were people from CALD communities. These figures may be much higher as it is estimated that country of birth or ethnicity were either unknown at the time or are unlikely to be known in 3 out of 4 drowning deaths from 2001-2012.

While 26% of Victorians were born overseas (an increase from 23% in 2001; ABS, 2012) evidence is lacking to determine the full extent of drowning risk for people from CALD communities.

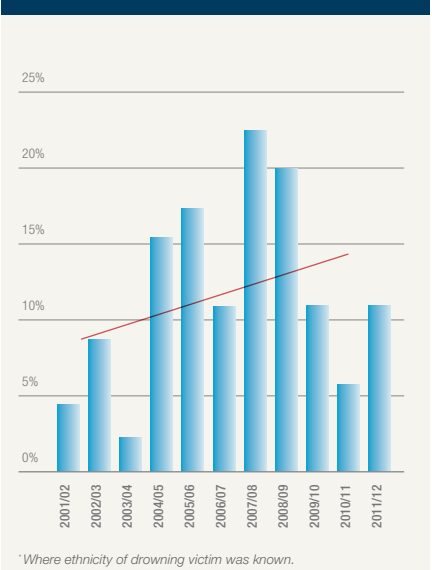
Due to the potential for increased drowning risk for people new to Australia as well as those with little or no experience with Australian aquatic environments, expansion of work with CALD communities is needed.

** Individuals from a CALD background are those who identify as having a specific cultural or linguistic affiliation by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry, ethnic origin, religion, preferred language, language(s) spoken at home, or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis. (DHSMSU, 2002)*

DROWNING DEATH RATE IN VICTORIA BY AGE 2001-2012



PERCENTAGE OF CALD* DROWNING DEATHS IN VICTORIA 2001-2012



*Where ethnicity of drowning victim was known.

54%

of people (20) drowned
in inland waterways this year.



WHEN, WHERE AND WHAT



WHEN DID THEY DROWN?

Season

Drowning incidents occur all year round. As in previous years the majority of drowning incidents in 2011/2012 occurred in summer (14, 38%), followed by spring (9, 24%), autumn (7, 19%) and winter (7, 19%).

WHERE DID THEY DROWN

Region- Place of occurrence

There was no difference this year in the region where drowning incidents occurred in Victoria. Just over half occurred in metropolitan regions (20, 54%) and just under half occurred in regional Victoria (17, 46%).

Region- Place of residence

Of the 37 people who drowned in Victoria in 2011/2012, 20 (54%) were persons residing in major cities in Victoria, 13 (35%) in regional Victoria and 4 (11%) unknown place of residence. While the majority of drowning deaths involved people residing in major cities of Victoria, the drowning rate per 100,000 population was greater in persons residing in regional Victoria (0.82 regional and remote areas versus 0.48 major cities).

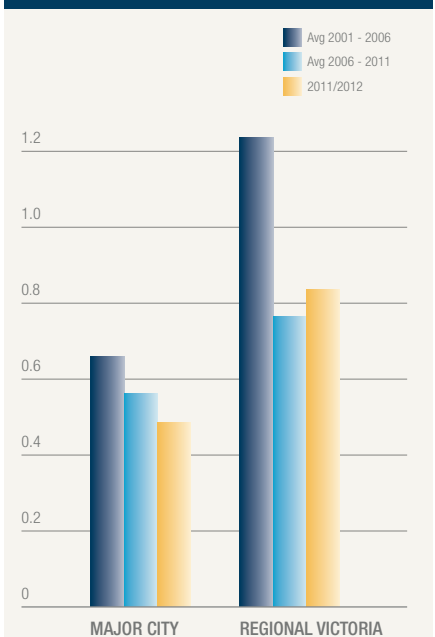
The drowning rate in people residing in regional Victoria has been decreasing over recent years. The overall drowning rate of people residing in regional Victoria in 2011/2012 (0.82) decreased by 17% compared to the 10 year average (2001-2011; 0.99). There was also a 41% decrease in the drowning rate in people residing in regional Victoria from 2006-2011, compared with 2001-2006. This may be due to a number of factors, one of which may be the dedicated PISBTW campaign focus in regional Victoria. This work must carry on to ensure a continued reduction in the drowning rate in regional Victoria.

Waterways

Over half (54%, 20) of drowning incidents this year occurred in inland waterways. This is a 45% increase compared to the 10 year average (14, 2001-2011). While drowning deaths in coastal waterways and in the home/ other locations have declined in recent years, there is a trend for the reverse in inland waterways. This may be due to increased water in inland waterways in more recent years.

There was an increase in drowning deaths in rivers/ creeks/ streams in 2011/2012, with 12 (32%) compared to the average of 7 per year from 2001-2011 (18%). This increase was due to drowning deaths in rivers/creeks/ streams in major cities in Victoria, with 9 deaths in 2011/2012 compared to the average of 4 per year over 10 years from 2001-2011.

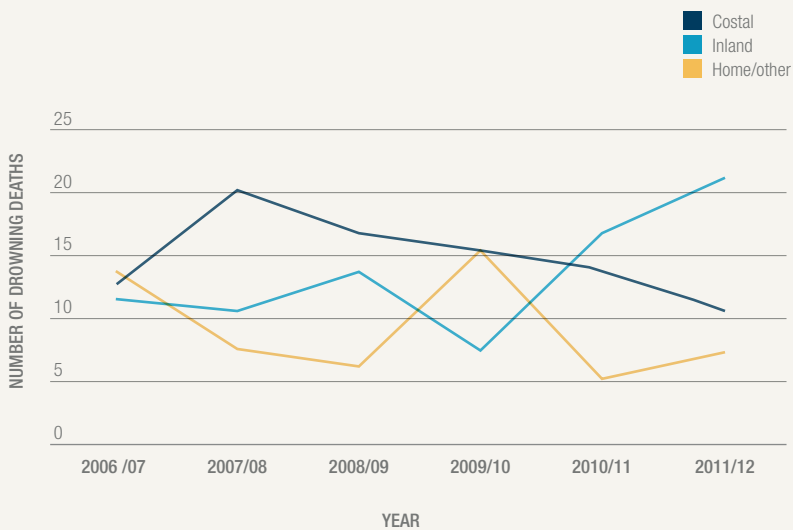
DROWNING DEATH RATE BY REMOTENESS OF RESIDENCE 2001-2012



* Remoteness zones are as specified in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ABS 2001). Major cities include capital cities, as well as major urban areas such as Geelong. The Regional Victoria category combines, Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote zones.

WHEN, WHERE AND WHAT CONT.

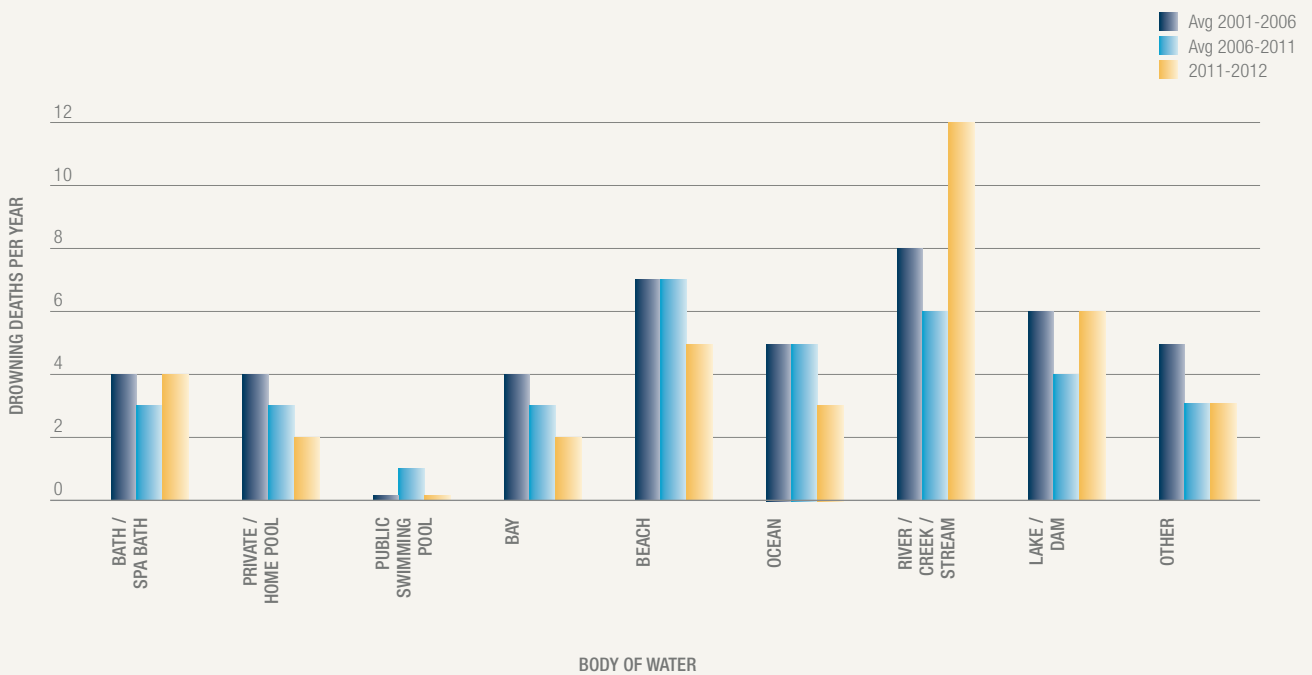
DROWNING DEATHS BY WATER TYPE 2006-2012



5

drowning deaths occurred when boating

DROWNING DEATHS BY TYPE OF BODY OF WATER 2001-2012





WHAT WERE THEY DOING

Activity

This year, as in previous years, the most common activities undertaken immediately prior to the drowning occurring were walking or playing near water (9, 24%); swimming, paddling or wading (7, 19%); boating (5, 14%); and bathing (4, 11%).

There was an increase in boating incidents again in 2011/2012 (5, 14%) compared to the previous 5 year average (3, 8%) from 2006-2011. The average from 2001-2006 was 9 (20%).

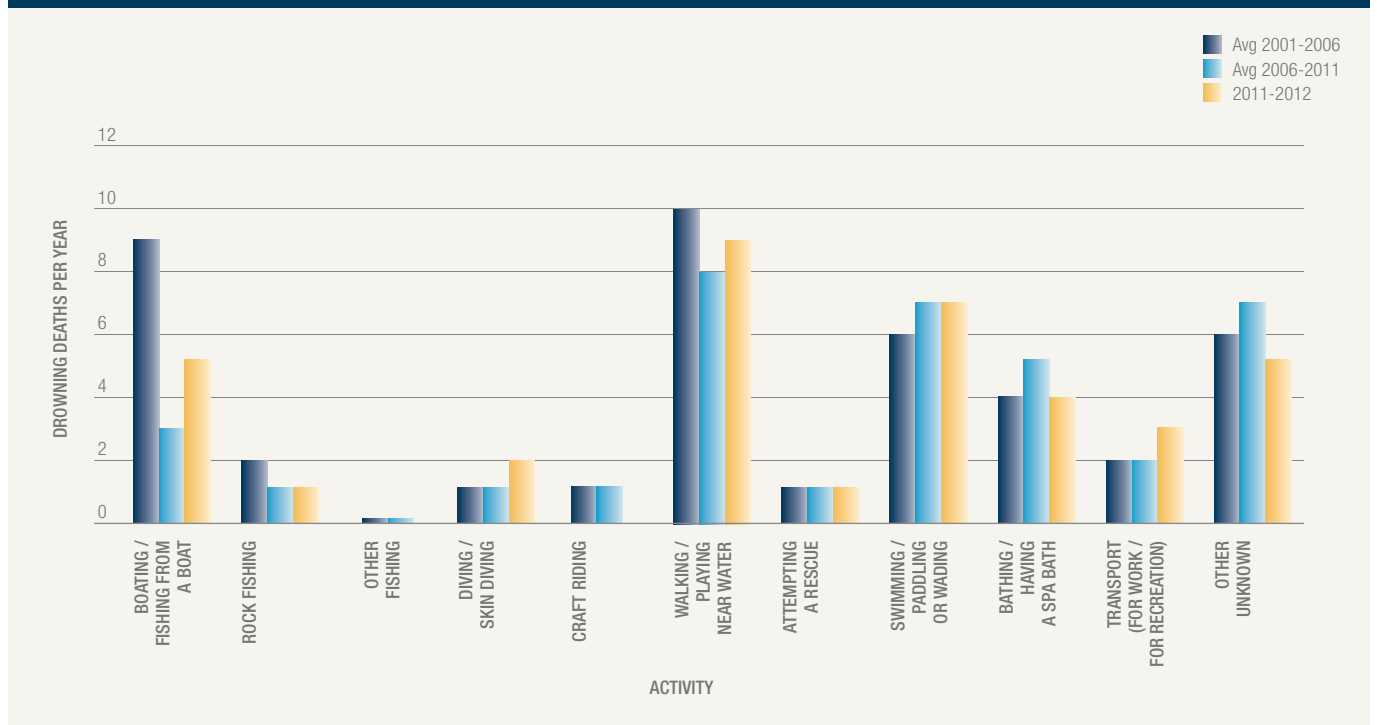
Boating incidents had decreased from 2006-2011 compared with 2001-2006, most likely due to the introduction of marine safety regulations regarding the compulsory wearing of Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) for recreational boaters, introduced in December 2005.

However the increase in the number of deaths which occurred while boating in the last two years is of concern. This is likely due to an increase in incidents involving non-powered vessels. This year, 4 of the 5 boating incidents occurred when canoeing/ kayaking. In the previous year, 2010/2011, 2 of the 5 boating incidents occurred when canoeing/ kayaking. In the years prior to this, the majority of boating incidents involved powered vessels.

4

of the 5 boating deaths occurred when canoeing/ kayaking

DROWNING DEATHS BY ACTIVITY IN VICTORIA 2001-2012



CONTRIBUTING FACTORS



ALCOHOL RELATED DROWNING DEATHS

Alcohol as a key risk factor for drowning continues; there were 10 deaths (27%) in 2011/12 where alcohol was reportedly consumed by the individual prior to drowning. This is similar to previous findings that on average 9 deaths per year (2000-2008) in Victoria are attributed to alcohol involvement (Matthews et al 2011).

The characteristics of those incidents where alcohol was reportedly involved were similar to previous years' findings, in that the majority involved males (8, 80%); and similar age groups, with those aged 25-59 the highest represented.

This year, a greater proportion of alcohol-related incidents occurred in inland waterways (9, 90%) compared with previous years. The incidents most often occurred in rivers/ creeks/ streams (6, 60%), and just over half occurred in major cities of Victoria (6, 60%).

PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES (PFDs)

Not wearing a life jacket or PFD has been cited as a contributing factor in many drowning deaths, particularly in boating activities and more recently in rock fishing fatalities.

Of all drowning deaths involving recreational boating or other activities where a PFD is required or recommended to be worn, such as rock fishing, 76% of victims (55) from 2001-2012 were reportedly not wearing a PFD.

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



NON-FATAL DROWNING



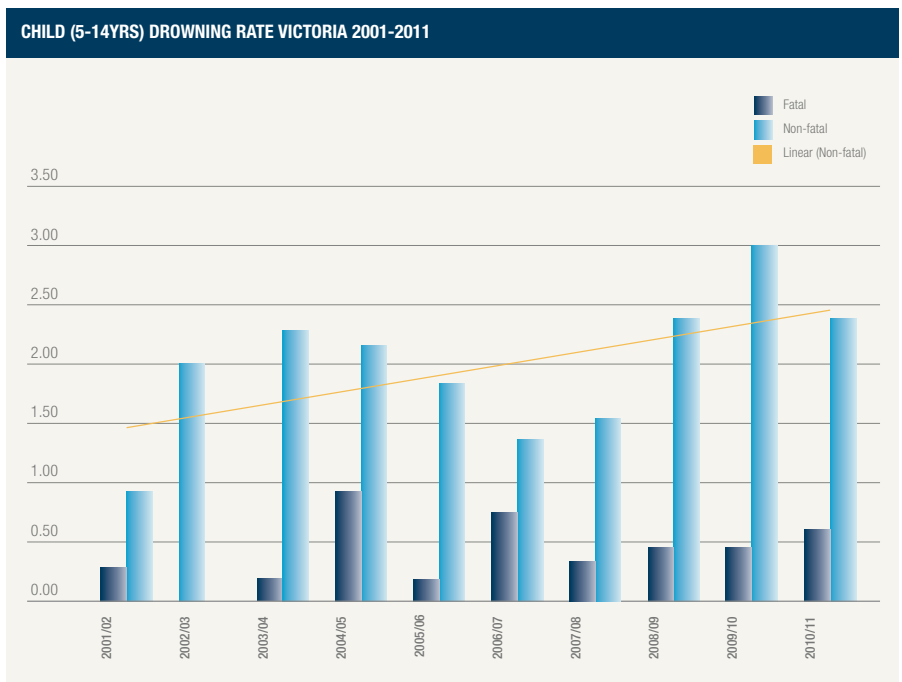
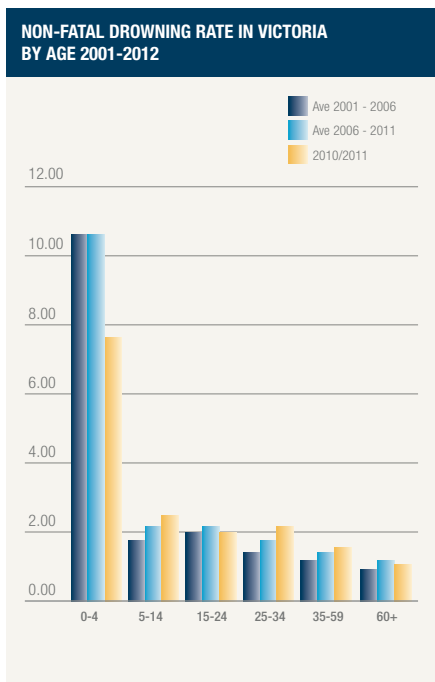
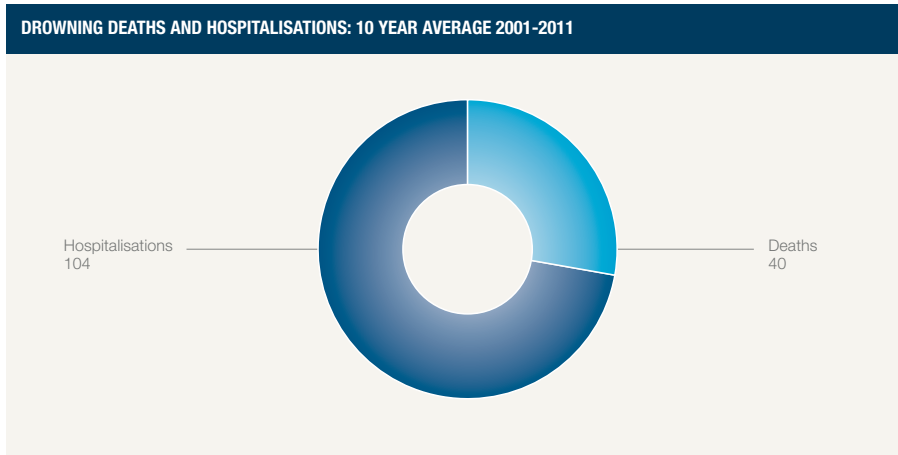
VISU data

There were 1,133 hospitalisations in Victoria from 2001-2011 as a result of non-fatal drowning; this is an average of 104 per year or almost 3 non-fatal drowning incidents for every one drowning death over the same time period. The crude hospitalisation rate was 2.00 per 100,000 population.

As with fatal drowning, males had a higher rate of drowning than females, however, the ratio was slightly reduced with males being twice as likely to experience a non-fatal drowning compared to females.

Children aged 0-4 years remain at greatest risk of drowning with the highest age-specific rate of non-fatal drowning 10.83 per 100,000 (2001-2011) followed by 2.08 for 15-24 year olds and 1.99 for 5-14 year olds.

There has been an increase in hospitalisations in children aged 5-14 years in more recent years, with an average drowning rate from 2001-2006 of 1.84 increasing to 2.15 in 2006-2011, an increase of 17%.





The role of the coroner in Victoria is to investigate certain deaths such as drowning, in order to determine the identity of the person who died, the cause of the death and, in some situations, the circumstances surrounding the death. As part of this process the coroner may recommend ways to help prevent similar deaths in the future.

There were two drowning deaths where coronial recommendations were made in 2011/2012. The recommendations relate to signage as well as the use of PFDs and other safety equipment. The following is a summary of each incident and the recommendations made by the coroner as contained in the coronial findings. Note, they are not exact replications from the findings, these should be accessed from the Coroners Court of Victoria website:

<http://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/home/case+findings/>

2

drowning deaths where coronial recommendations were made

2009

In December 2009, a 15 year old student went to South Melbourne Beach with a group of about 25 friends. The deceased and some of the group went swimming in the water. A short time later two people observed the deceased face down in waist deep water. Several beach goers came to his aid and two of them commenced CPR. An ambulance was called and the deceased was transported to hospital where he was declared dead. On that day a southerly wind was blowing causing choppy conditions, with waves in the vicinity of forty-five to seventy-five centimetres in height. This was sufficient to produce deep gutters with active rips forming on the beach.

Recommendation

Appropriate signage at all beaches in the Port Phillip municipality is an important initiative given their popularity and proximity to the Melbourne CBD:

1. The Port Phillip Council should consider installing permanent warning signs particularly in the area of South Melbourne Beach and any similar beach in the municipality which may pose risks to swimmers from troughs and rips.

2010

In October 2010, a 74 year old went fishing alone. After he failed to return home, police were notified. A police search located the deceased, in waters near Reef Island in Westernport Bay. The police investigation into the deceased's vessel revealed it was home-made and un-seaworthy. It was easy to tip over and impossible to reboard. The deceased wore a Personal Flotation Device, but one that was not suited to long term head support while awaiting rescue. In addition, he did not carry an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) or a Personal Locating Beacon (PLB). Tragically the combination of these factors led to his drowning death.

Recommendation

1. That Transport Safety Victoria (TSV) continue to advise operators of human powered craft, to go beyond their regulatory safety requirements by carrying extra safety equipment such as Type 1 PFD, which has more buoyant properties than Type 2 or 3 PFDs, and an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) or a Personal Locating Beacon (PLB).
2. That Transport Safety Victoria consider notification and advice to boating enthusiasts who construct their own vessels of the regulatory requirements for seaworthiness and safety equipment.

KEY WATER SAFETY AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS

REFERENCES

THERE ARE A RANGE OF AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS WITH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING WATER SAFETY AND DROWNING PREVENTION IN VICTORIA.

VICTORIAN WATER SAFETY COUNCIL (VWSC)

- Life Saving Victoria
- Aquatics & Recreation Victoria
- Australian Volunteer Coast Guard – Victoria
- Boating Industry Association of Victoria
- Canoeing Victoria
- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Justice – Emergency Management Programs and Resources
- Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority
- Kidsafe Victoria Inc
- Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board
- Parks Victoria
- Surfing Victoria
- Swimming Victoria Inc
- Transport Safety Victoria
- Victoria Water Police/Search & Rescue Squads
- VRFish
- Yachting Victoria
- YMCA

OTHER WATER SAFETY AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS

- Central Coastal Board
- Civic Mutual Plus
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Department of Planning and Community Development
- Department of Sustainability and Environment
- Life Saving Victoria - Life Saving Clubs
- Local Government Authorities
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre
- Swimming Pool and Spa Association
- Victorian Coastal Council
- Victorian Managed Insurance Authority
- Victorian Multicultural Commission

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