



Play it Safe by the Water

Consumer tracking and
program evaluation report
2022 – 23

Prepared by Research and Health
Promotion

Life Saving Victoria

August 2023



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Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

We at Life Saving Victoria acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways where our activities take place. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the volunteer and community members, government entities and aquatic industry agencies that provided feedback via surveys, interviews and focus group sessions.

Agencies

- Aquatics & Recreation Victoria
- Belgravia Leisure
- Kidsafe
- Life Saving Victoria (diversity and inclusion department)
- Life Saving Victoria (education department)
- Surfing Victoria
- Triathlon Australia

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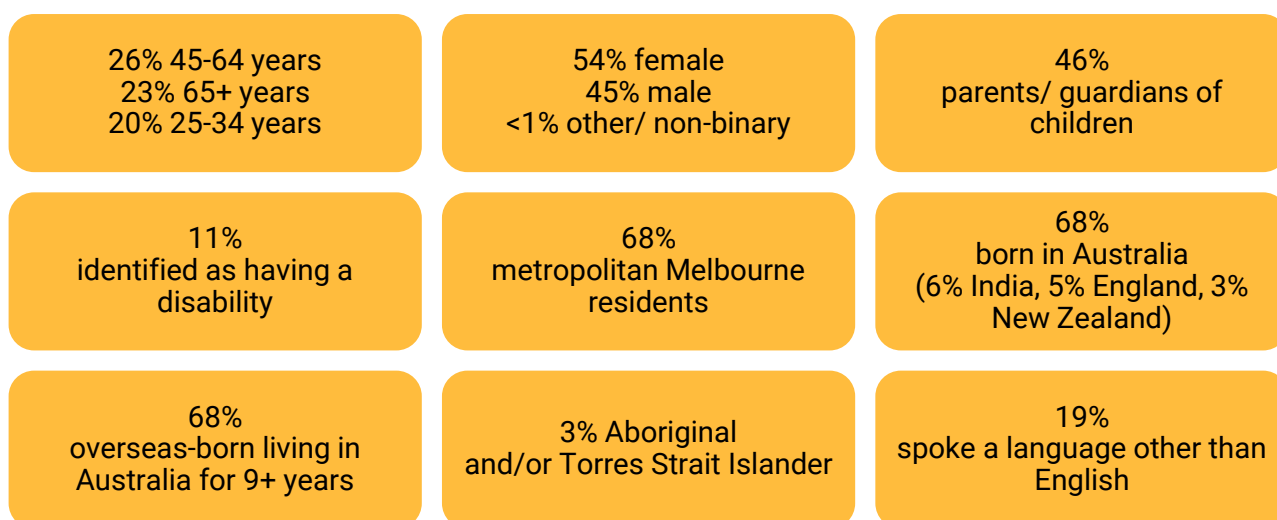
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Consumer tracking 2022 – 23

The Play it Safe by the Water (PISBTW) consumer tracking survey is conducted annually to examine the impact of aquatic safety messaging delivered via public awareness campaigns and education programs, on the self-reported recall, awareness, attitudes and behaviours of Victorians in aquatic settings. An online survey of **717 Victorians** aged 18 years and over was conducted by social research data collection agency I-view (Ipsos Observer). Respondents were selected via a random sampling process, which included quotas placed on location, gender and age according to population distribution and demographics. Analysis and reporting of data was undertaken by the research and health promotion team at Life Saving Victoria (LSV).

Demographics

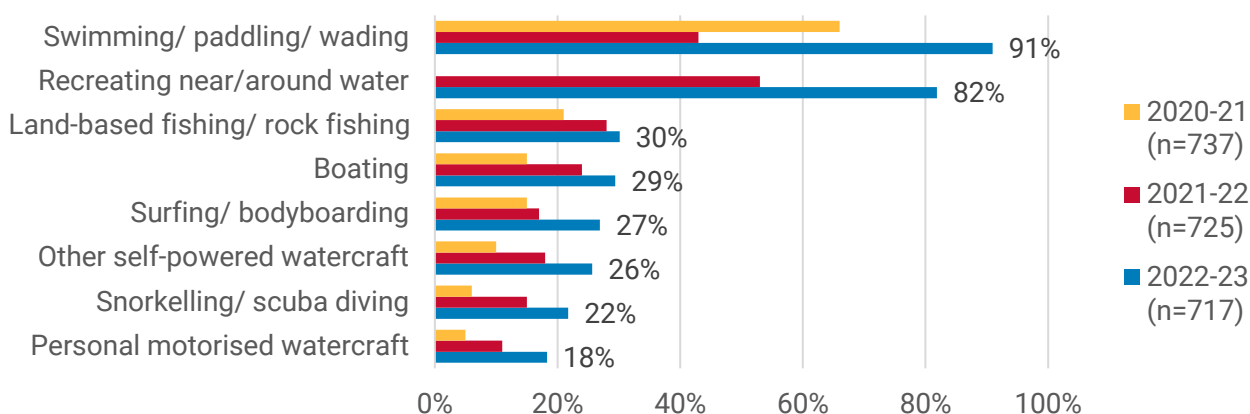


Key findings

- January, February and December were the most popular times of year for visitation to coastal and inland waterways.
- The top three reasons for visiting coastal and inland waterways were due to them being convenient to get to, close to home, and benefitting participants' health and wellbeing.
- Seventy-one per cent of participants have taken part in formal swimming lessons (66% in 2021 – 22; 67% in 2020 – 21).
- Thirty-three per cent of participants self-reported being a weak/ non-swimmer in a 25-metre pool (36% in 2021 – 22; 37% in 2020 – 21)
- Thirty-nine per cent of participants self-reported being a weak/ non-swimmer in coastal/ inland waterways (43% in 2021 – 22; 46% in 2020 – 21).
- The highest prompted water safety message recalled was to swim between the flags (37%); the lowest was for abalone fishing (3%).

Water safety knowledge, attitudes and behaviour

Figure 1. Aquatic recreational activities undertaken by participants – 2020 – 21 to 2022 – 23



⇒ In 2022 – 23 swimming/ paddling wading was most often done at swimming pools (47%).

⇒ In 2022 – 23 recreating near/ around water was most often done at coastal waterways (36%).

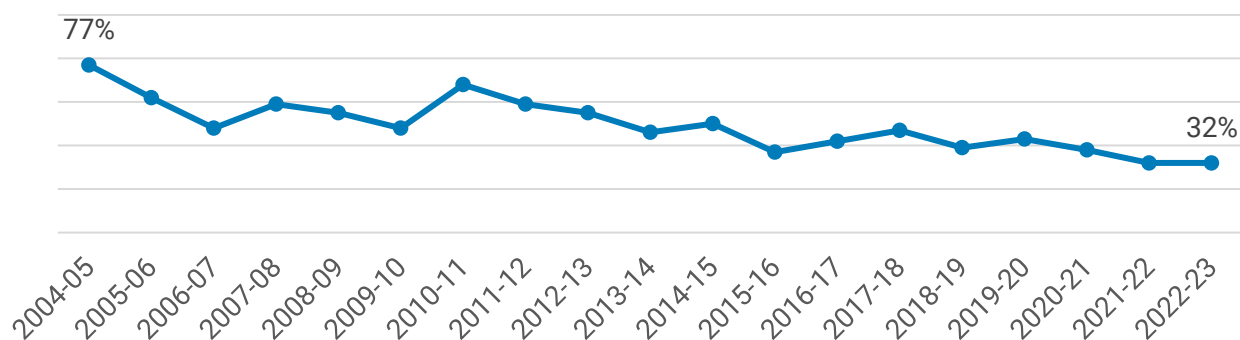
⇒ In 2022 – 23 fishing was most often done at inland waterways (16%).

Table 1. Participant agreement (%) with knowledge/ attitudinal/ behavioural statements

Statement	Participants who agreed/ strongly agreed		
	2020 – 21	2021 – 22	2022 – 23
If I was unexpectedly swept into water close to shore, I could exit safely unassisted.	52%	39%	41%
I know, and can perform, CPR.	57%	46%	44%
I am aware of how to perform a safe rescue.	61%	33%	37%
There's no risk in having alcohol around the water.	24%	18%	22%
I can identify a rip current/ strong flowing current.	44%	32%	37%
Red and yellow flags are for weak/ non swimmers.	26%	18%	18%
I always check and read safety signage where I partake in activities around water.	89%	77%	78%
I always tell someone where I'm going/ what I'm doing for water-based activities.	88%	74%	75%

Water safety messaging

Figure 2. Participant recall of water safety information over 19 years



Top 5 water safety messages recalled by participants (prompted)

- ⇒ **37%** swim between the red and yellow flags (38% in 2021 – 22)
- ⇒ **35%** don't drink alcohol around water (35% in 2021 – 22)
- ⇒ **34%** supervise children around water (36% in 2021 – 22)
- ⇒ **27%** rip current messaging (27% in 2021 – 22)
- ⇒ **24%** home pool fence safety (28% in 2021 – 22)

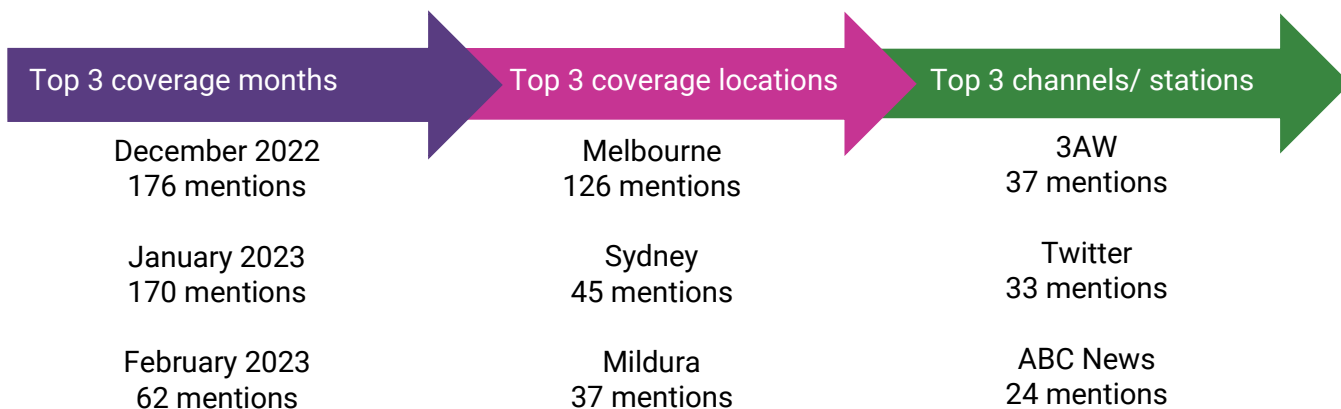
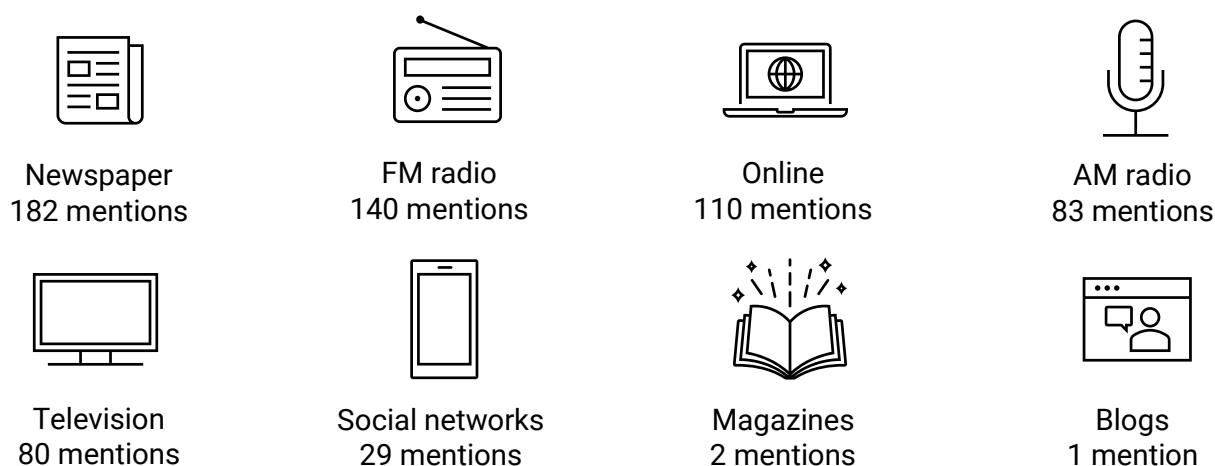
Top 5 channels/ sources for water safety messaging – 2020 – 21 to 2022 – 23

Year	Channel/Source	Percentage
2022 – 23	Television ads	58%
	Signage at beaches/rivers/lakes	34%
	Media/ news report	28%
	Online/print/radio news stories of drowning incidents in Victoria	22%
	Learn-to-swim lessons/aquatic centres	20%
2021 – 22	Television ads	59%
	Signage at beaches/rivers/lakes	29%
	Media/ news report	28%
	Radio	15%
	Catch-up TV	26%
2020 – 21	Television ads	74%
	Signage at beaches/rivers/lakes	27%
	Radio	23%
	Catch-up TV	22%
	Learn-to-swim lessons/aquatic centres	15%

Impact of water safety messaging on participants	Percentage (%)		
	2022 – 23	Average (2017–2022)	Difference
Reminded them of water safety issues.	67%	70%	-5%
Told them something new about water safety.	21%	16%	30%
Made them more careful around water.	51%	41%	24%
Made them plan ahead to ensure safety before participation, in, on or around water.	29%	23%	26%
None/ unsure	7%	10%	-28%

Media monitoring 2022 – 23

Media monitoring is conducted annually to review the exposure of campaign messages through traditional and social media. Information is collected via iSentia media monitoring service review between 31 July 2022 and 31 July 2023 for inclusion of water safety issues, drowning statistics and safety messages and/or calls to action. Data were collected regarding water safety messaging mentions, potential audience reach and advertising space rate.



Recommendations

1. Continue engagement with traditional media outlets, including television and radio channels, and news outlets, to align with sources and channels where participants primarily receive water safety messages.
2. Increase promoting the risk of drowning outside of summer months, including through targeted messaging to showcase which demographics and activities are seasonally high-risk.

Aquatic industry water safety merchandise distribution

Aquatics & Recreation Victoria's (ARV's) aquatic industry water safety merchandise distribution has been undertaken for over a decade. ARV distributed PISBTW-branded merchandise to aquatic and recreation (AR) facilities to provide and enhance water safety messaging for learn to swim participants, as well as to participants' families to increase awareness of water safety within the home and aquatic environments. Each year, key water safety messages and logos are imprinted onto a variety of merchandise, which is distributed to over 200 aquatic and recreational facilities in both metropolitan and regional locations in Victoria.

27
organisational
representatives completed
the survey

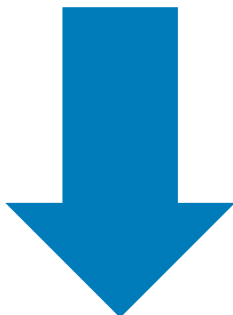
3.8 / 5
Average score of
participants' satisfaction
with merchandise relevance

78%
of participants were either
satisfied or very satisfied
with the merchandise
relevance



Positive feedback

- Practical for swimming lessons to teach children about water safety with a variety of merchandise and fun activities.
- Relevance to water safety and aquatics.
- Great water safety messaging, including for activities to enhance knowledge, recollection and teaching others.
- Enjoyment of merchandise types, especially sunscreen.



Room for improvement

- Some organisations commented that their merchandise arrived late or was never received.
- Some participants asked for higher quality resources.
- Consider other merchandise types, including bringing back 'fake tattoos' due to previous popularity, safety packs for parents/caregivers, and instructions on how to use merchandise to enhance water safety learnings.

Recommendations

1. Continue provision of merchandise which has relevance to aquatic lessons and activities to maximise children's engagement with water safety messaging.
2. Consider merchandise which increases parent/caregiver engagement with water safety messaging.
3. Consider providing merchandise that is of high quality to ensure sustainability of materials.
4. Ensure provision of resources is done in a timely manner, and potentially follow-up with facilities to ensure merchandise has been received.

Regional Victoria Adult Open Water Program

Belgravia Leisure's Regional Victoria Adult Open Water Program aims to increase the water safety awareness and knowledge, and self-preservation skills (including personal fitness awareness) of adults from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, and older adults.

The activities-based program has a specific focus on risks in inland waterways in Bendigo, and utilised connections with local agencies in regional areas, including Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services and Bendigo Health, to engage program participants.

The two-hour long sessions were run weekly over four weeks and incorporated a beginning session at the local aquatic centre prior to the open water experience at a reservoir.

The following results were provided through managerial feedback in a post-program survey. Overall, the program had **11 participants**, including people from CALD communities and an older adult.

Program outcomes



- Participants' ability to scull and float in water increased from pre- to post-program.
- Participants had a noticeable increase in confidence around water from pre- to post-program.
- Using lifejackets was beneficial, including when swimming was challenging in open water.
- Participants have been observed attending aquatic centres more frequently post-program, indicating that the program was successful in increasing water familiarisation.

What were the challenges?



- Lack of interpreter available in beginning stages.
- Poor weather conditions with cold, windy days.
- Participants had issues with transportation to program.

Recommendations

1. Engage with relevant organisations and community leaders to understand the specialised needs of the priority populations prior to program commencement, including potential language barriers, to prepare accordingly.
2. Consider relocating sessions to aquatic centres on days with poor weather conditions; alternatively, use these days to provide theory-based lessons if aquatic centre is unavailable for use.
3. Utilise funding provided to support transport costs, e.g., through a communal bus to assist with ease of access to programs; alternatively, liaise with community organisations to allocate resourcing for transport.

Kidsafe Victoria

Safe barriers save lives: backyard pool safety campaign



The Safe Barriers Save Lives backyard pool safety campaign reminds pool and spa owners of the importance of checking their pool/spa safety barriers and provides a call to action at the beginning of daylight saving. The campaign also highlights the importance of other child safety measures, such as the need for active adult supervision, learning CPR/ first aid, undertaking swimming lessons and increasing water safety knowledge.



The campaign has run for the past 10 years in Victoria and has been leveraged to deliver a national campaign involving the Kidsafe state and territory offices since 2017. The 2022 – 23 campaign built upon the success of the themes and resources implemented in 2021 – 22, in which new assets were developed, including a new video with a family who experienced a fatal backyard pool drowning.

Campaign outcomes

1
live national segment on the
Today Show

11
online news articles

3
print news articles

300+
radio station downloads to
play during news segments

14,440
website visits

250,000+
people reached via social
media posts



Recommendations

Due to the ongoing success of the initiative, there are no recommendations for improvement. The campaign should continue to utilise traditional and social media platforms to maximise engagement with its target populations (parents/ caregivers).

In July 2023, Kidsafe Victoria hosted three free winter safety webinars to educate parents, carers and relevant health professionals of common hazards and risks associated with child drownings in winter months. Topics covered included information on the latest child-related drowning statistics, key drowning hazards in and around the home (e.g. baths, buckets, eskies) and regional water safety hazards (e.g. dams), as well as advice on how to best reduce the risk of drowning, such as through the use of active, focussed adult supervision. All registered attendees were provided with an online winter safety pack containing checklists, factsheets, guides, videos and the webinar recording.

Among the 142 registered webinar attendees were relevant health professionals including Maternal and Child Health Service (MCH) nurses, family day care workers and early childhood staff (n=113), as well as parents and carers from both metropolitan (n=19) and regional (n=10) Victoria.

Surveys were distributed to participants post-webinar via email to evaluate the effectiveness of the webinar in increasing awareness of common drowning risk and hazards and informing best practise for prevention.

Outcomes

Among survey respondents (n=16):

100%
believed the webinar
was useful

85%
reported an increase in both
knowledge of the common
drowning hazards and tips to
prevent drowning incidents

100%
would recommend the
webinar to other
professionals

Recommendations

Due to the success of the webinars in increasing awareness of child-related drowning risks and hazards, the following recommendations aim to build further upon the success of the initiative, funding permitting:

1. Continue utilising an online format to encourage participation and attendance from all areas of Victoria and continue the provision of documents in an online format for ease of access and environmentally friendly purposes.
2. Consider the implementation of seasonal webinars throughout the year, drawing upon key trends observed in child-related drownings through all four seasons.

Life Saving Victoria: diversity and inclusion



Meet a lifeguard program

Background

The meet a lifeguard program is delivered by Life Saving Victoria's (LSV's) diversity and inclusion department. This 60-minute interactive session, conducted by a lifeguard, is designed to educate students and community groups on making safe decisions in and around coastal and inland waterways. Participants learn about lifeguard roles, coastal and inland water safety, aquatic signage and rescue techniques. These programs are designed to educate a variety of demographics and include English Language School students from primary to secondary years, adult English classes, multicultural community service groups, refugee organisations, people with disabilities, older adults and more.

Data collection and analyses

Data were collected from organisational representatives post-program to determine participant satisfaction and water safety knowledge resulting from the program. The 86 respondents included school teachers, community leaders and other organisational representatives. Data were also obtained from instructors of the diversity and inclusion beach programs via post-season survey (n=6), which aimed to understand instructors' satisfaction with the program. Additionally, observations were undertaken by the LSV research and health promotion team at an adult English language class for newly arrived Australians.

Respondent feedback

97%
of respondents were
satisfied/ very satisfied
with their overall experience

98%
of respondents were
satisfied/ very satisfied
with the quality of
instruction

99%
of respondents were
satisfied/ very satisfied
with how appropriate
language levels were

98%
of respondents were
satisfied/ very satisfied
with resources and
activities

86%
of respondents believed
that program participants
learnt 'a lot'

100%
of respondents would
recommend the program to
others

Positive feedback →

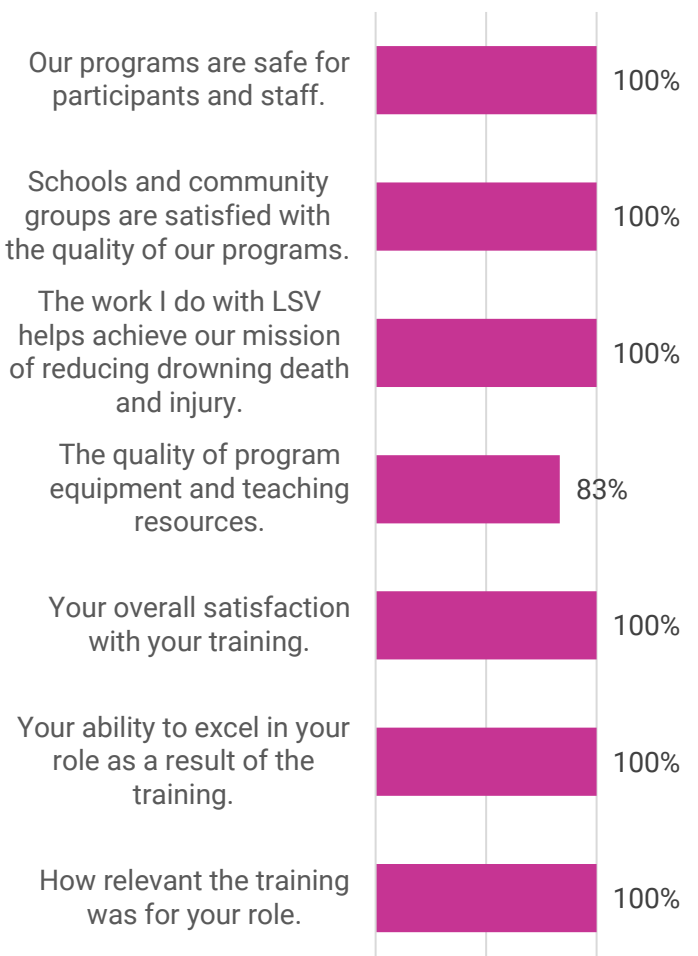
- The sessions were engaging and informative, and seen as a great example of how to educate multicultural cohorts.
- The information provided was relevant, increased participants' water safety knowledge, and inspired discussion.
- There was high praise for great instruction.
- Language used was appropriate and presentation slides were updated from previous years to be more user-friendly, allowing for further clarity and understanding of topics discussed.
- Appreciation for flexibility and accessibility.

Room for improvement →

- There was desire for new content for participants who have previously undertaken the program.
- While sessions were interactive, some respondents would have preferred more demonstrative activities instead of talking.
- Sometimes instructors spoke too quickly.

Instructor feedback




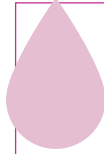




Figure 3. Instructors who are satisfied/ very satisfied with aspects of the meet a lifeguard program (n=6)



“Participants loved the session. Even those who would normally not engage in these sessions appeared to be interested. As one staff member commented, “it was a masterclass in how to run a session with our cohort”. The info was relevant and generated a lot of discussions. The level of delivery was excellent too.
Thank you!”
– Organisational representative

“[The program] provides students with such important skills and the fact that there is no cost makes it so accessible for schools.”
– School teacher

Observations

 <p>Among the 16 participants, only 4 put their hand up when asked if they could swim.</p>	 <p>Messaging was simple and concise, and various demonstrations were used for practical activities.</p>
 <p>The class were engaged. Many participants were taking pictures of the PowerPoint with their phones and some were taking notes.</p>	 <p>Many participants knew of their local swimming pool, and were aware that it is a safe, controlled environment.</p>
 <p>Participants also knew of dangers around bathtub risks ("fall down") and aware of alcohol risks in aquatic locations.</p>	 <p>The session was useful as an exercise in learning English for newly arrived migrants, and as an introduction to Australian culture.</p>
 <p>The PowerPoint used was very simple and visual in nature, eliciting further engagement from the class.</p>	 <p>Participants stated that they learnt about being safe at the beach, recognising rip currents, finding lifeguards and that you should fish in groups.</p>

Recommendations

1. Improving data collection methods: consider having two separate sections on what to improve and what worked well, for ease of response filtering. Further, it may be of use to ask more specific questions to measure program impact for program participants, e.g., how much water safety knowledge improved, skill increases, etc.
2. Continue engagement through practical activities which are visual in nature. Consider having more advanced lessons for previous program participants if feasible and/or if it is guaranteed there will be no new program participants.
3. Consider the provision of handouts post-program for participants to continue recollection of water safety theory and practice their English skills.

Life Saving Victoria: diversity and inclusion



Multicultural beach program

Background

The multicultural beach program is delivered by Life Saving Victoria's (LSV) diversity and inclusion department. The program aims to increase water safety education, aid familiarisation in coastal environments and teach vital lifesaving and rescue skills for newly arrived migrant communities through the use of practical activities. Background and round-robin-style activities undertaken included: a coastal safety talk, a dry rescue activity using rescue tubes, a lifejacket demonstration, surfing (including a dry demonstration prior to in-water use), and dry activities (soccer). These programs are designed to educate a variety of demographics and include English Language School students from primary to secondary years, adult English classes, multicultural community service groups, refugee organisations, people with disabilities, older adults and more.

Data collection and analyses

Data were collected from organisational representatives post-program to determine participant satisfaction and water safety knowledge resulting from the program. The 63 respondents included school teachers, community leaders and other organisational representatives. Data were also obtained from instructors of the diversity and inclusion beach programs via post-season survey, which aimed to understand instructor satisfaction with the program. Observations were also undertaken by the LSV research and health promotion team at Altona Beach.

"I have seen growth and development in the delivery of this program, and it continues to be responsive to the diverse community we work with."
– Organisational representative

Respondent feedback

100%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with their overall experience

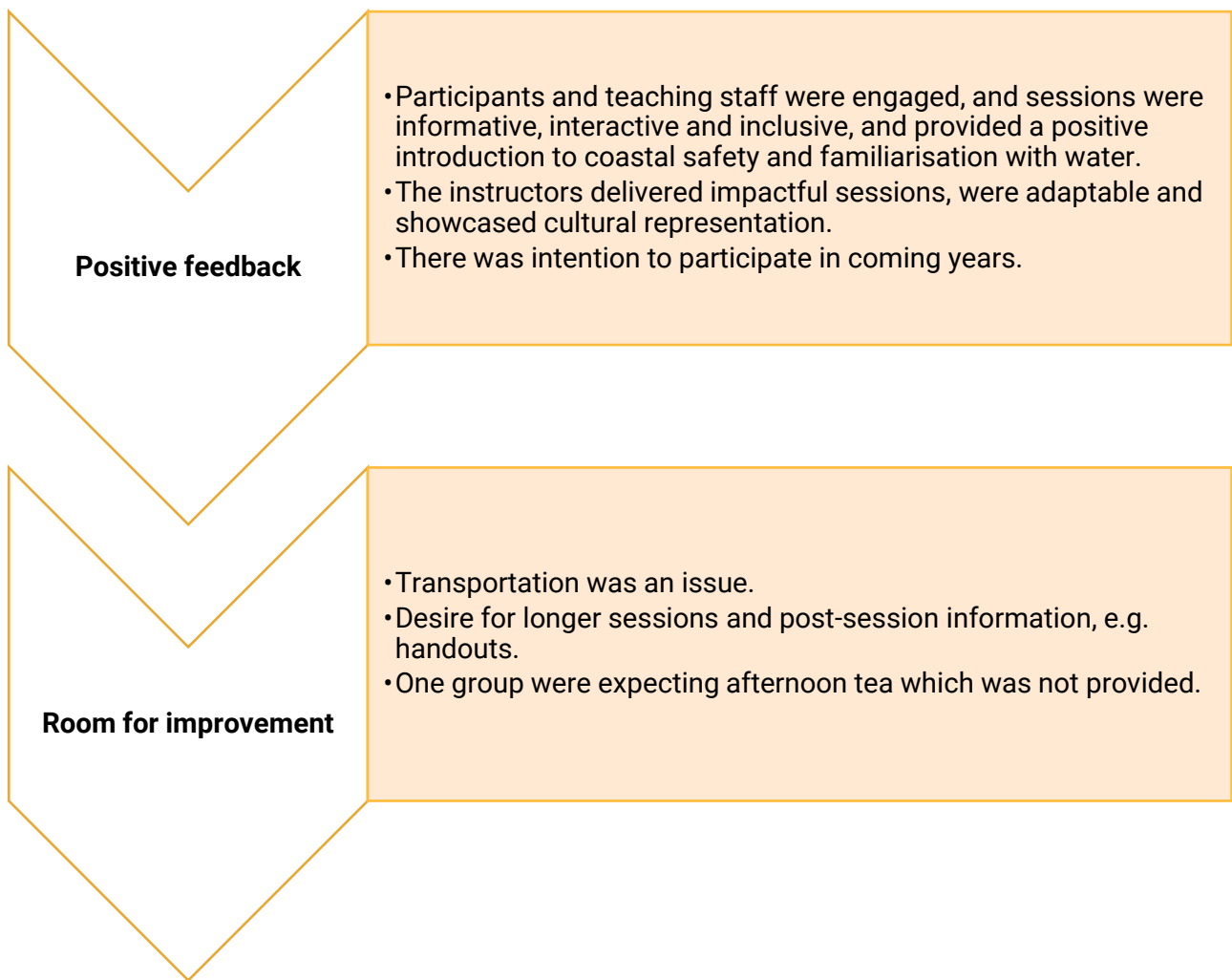
100%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with the quality of instruction

98%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with how appropriate language levels were

98%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with resources and activities

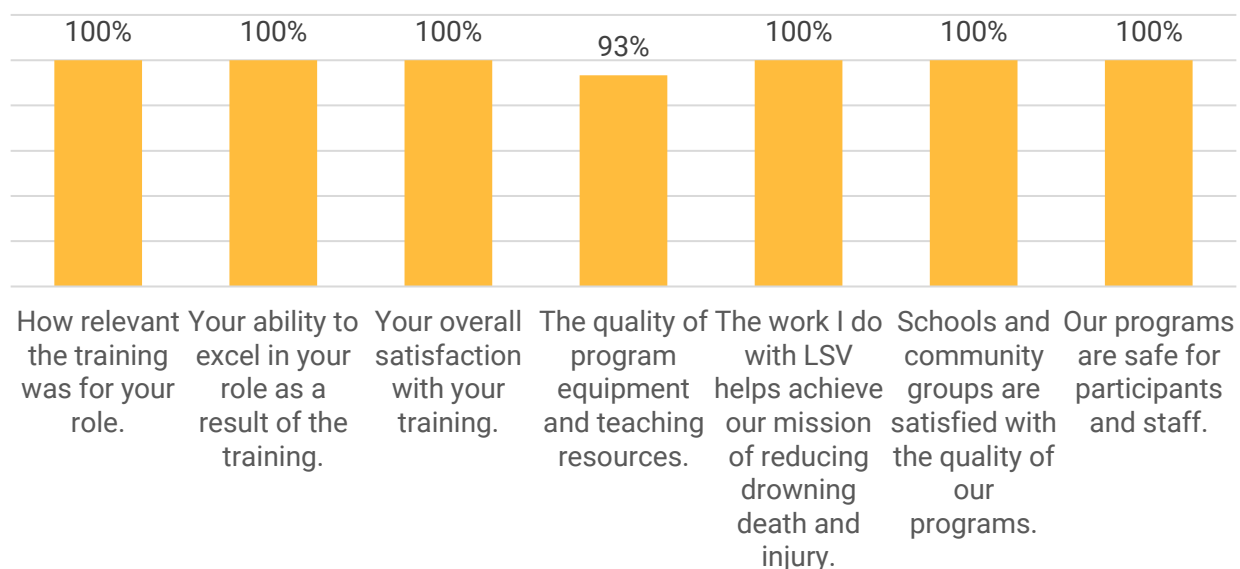
90%
of respondents believed that program participants learnt 'a lot'

100%
of respondents would recommend this program to others



Instructor feedback

Figure 4. Percentage of instructors who were satisfied or very satisfied with aspects of the multicultural beach program (n=15)



Observations

Great instruction

- All instructors underwent training and were active lifesavers/ lifeguards with qualifications in open water safety, e.g., SRC, Bronze medallion.
- The teaching team had a high representation of people from culturally and linguistically and diverse backgrounds, including similar ones to the students which align with World Health Organisation recommendations.

Strong rapport

- The students had previous rapport with LSV staff due to the school visit for the Meet a Lifeguard program – this also led to high retention among participants for coastal safety advice.
- There was strong cohesion among the instruction staff, with one reporting they were “like a family”.

Strong engagement

- The sessions were tailored to specific school needs when possible, for example, choosing a beach closest to the school and tailoring start and end times.
- Despite the language barriers, the students were engaged and appeared to understand, potentially due to non-visual cues, e.g. body language, following others.

Recommendations

1. Improving data collection methods: consider having two separate sections on what to improve and what worked well, for ease of response filtering. Further, collecting data to better understand program impacts, such as change in water safety knowledge and skills.
2. Increase communication efforts with schools/ organisations, including to:
 - a. Provide advice regarding transportation options,
 - b. Provide water safety information post-program, e.g., handouts or visuals, and

Life Saving Victoria: diversity and inclusion



Resuscitate a mate program

Background

The meet a lifeguard program is delivered by Life Saving Victoria's diversity and inclusion department. This 60-minute interactive session is designed to introduce participants to basic anatomy and emergency response management (DRSABCD). Participants learn lifesaving skills and how to respond in an emergency. These programs are designed to educate a variety of demographics and include English Language School students from primary to secondary years, adult English classes, multicultural community service groups, refugee organisations, people with disabilities, older adults and more.

Data collection and analyses

Data were collected from organisational representatives post-program to determine participant satisfaction and water safety knowledge resulting from the program. The 47 respondents included school teachers, community leaders and other organisational representatives. Data were also obtained from instructors of the diversity and inclusion beach programs via post-season survey (n=6), which aimed to understand instructor satisfaction with the program. Additionally, observations were undertaken by the LSV research and health promotion team during an adult English language class.

"Thank you for motivating us to locate the defibrillator at our Centre! It was an enlightening session for everyone, preceded by prompt and clear emails from LSV, thank you!"
– Organisational representative

"[The instructor is] very professional and very kind."
– Participant

Respondent feedback

100%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with their overall experience

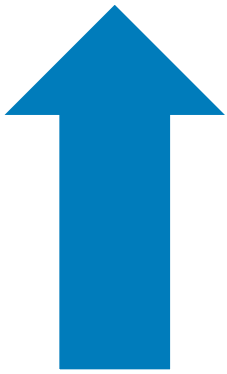
100%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with the quality of instruction

100%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with how appropriate language levels were

100%
of respondents were satisfied/ very satisfied with resources and activities

89%
of respondents believed that program participants learnt 'a lot'

100%
of respondents would recommend this program to others



Positive feedback

- Practical, engaging and enjoyable; participants learnt a lot from the informative sessions.
- Appropriate language levels were used, and sessions were delivered in a friendly and professional manner.
- Lots of praise for overall program and instruction, very little improvements noted.

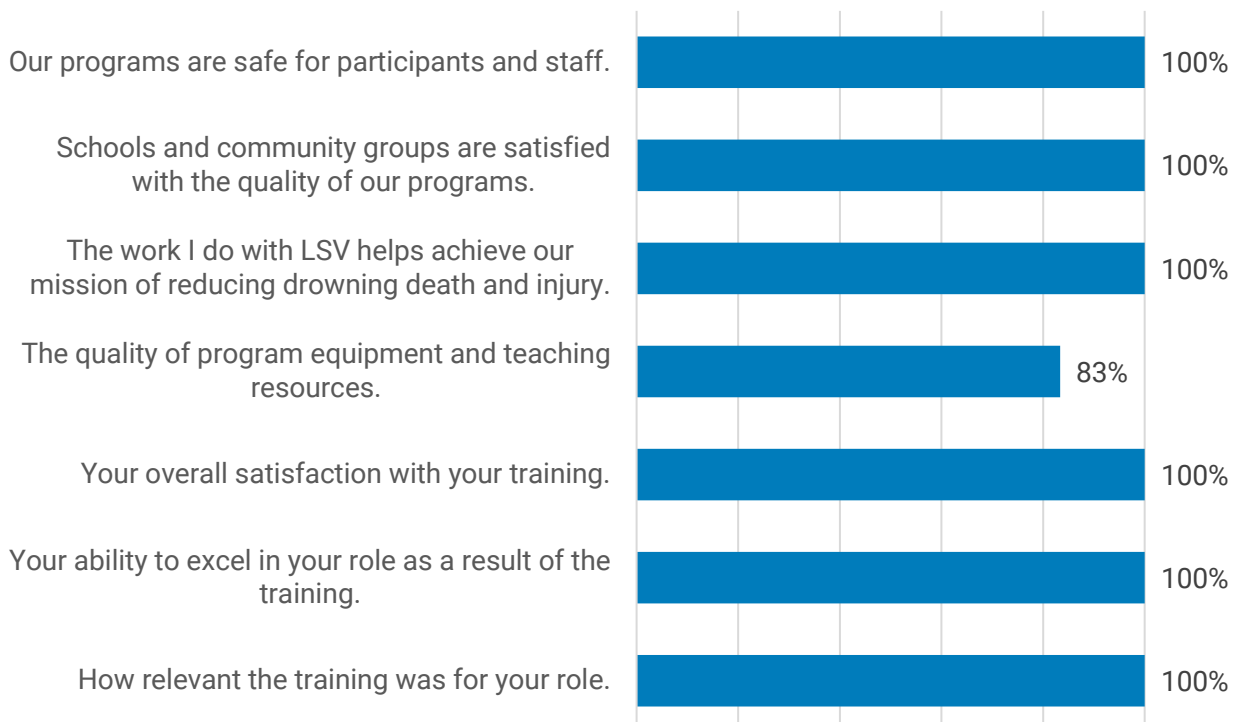


Room for improvement

- Desire for follow-up session and/or sessions for parents at school due to popularity.
- Disappointment over lack of funding for future programs.

Instructor feedback

Figure 5. Percentage of instructors who were satisfied or very satisfied with aspects of the meet a lifeguard program (n=6)



Observations

Participant engagement

- The instructor consistently checked if they were speaking too fast and if everyone understood.
- Participants were answering questions when possible, listening attentively and taking notes.
- Simple quiz of participant knowledge through questions at end of session to determine knowledge (high recollection was observed).

Intercultural learnings

- Participants were learning new terminology as part of their English language course - not just water safety specific, but also directions ("slow", "fast"), letters and the alphabet.
- Encouraged interculturalism by asking participants to count in their native languages to ensure understanding of CPR rhythms without language barriers.

Safety

- Hygiene practises were used - no mouths touched CPR dummies (this did not lessen impact of lesson).

Recommendations

1. Improving data collection methods: consider having two separate sections on what to improve and what worked well, for ease of response filtering. Further, it may be of use to ask more specific questions to measure program impact for program participants, e.g., how much water safety knowledge improved, skill increases, etc.
2. Consider implementing follow-up sessions for participants to continue improving on skills; or connect participants with local lifesaving clubs to encourage participation within the lifesaving community.
3. Consider having follow-up sessions for participants' families; or hold evening sessions for family members to attend.
4. Communicate funding options for communities to access program.

Life Saving Victoria: education

Lifesaving education programs



Background

In 2022, Life Saving Victoria's education department launched their Lifesaving education programs (LEP) which replaced their previous Open Water Learning Experience. The LEP introduces school-aged students to open water environments – including beaches, rivers, lakes and pools – through practical learning experiences, with the aim to teach lifesaving and emergency response skills and empower students to make safe decisions in aquatic environments.

Round-robin-style activities undertaken include: a sun safety and beach safety talk (including a demonstration on how to read signage), boogie boarding, using lifejackets to float in water, a rescue simulation, including using rescue tubes to perform rescues on the sand in a controlled environment, and a resuscitation demonstration.

Data collection and analyses

Data were collected from participants post-program to determine their satisfaction and engagement levels, and water safety knowledge resulting from the program. The 121 respondents (n=117 beach programs; n=4 river/lake programs) were aged between eight and 12 years of age (grades three to six). No participants completed the survey for the pool-based programs. Further, data were obtained from instructors and team leaders of the open water program via post-season survey, which aimed to understand instructor satisfaction with the program. Due to the large size of this survey, only information directly relating to the effectiveness of the LEP will be reported. Additionally, observations were undertaken by the LSV research and health promotion team at Sandridge beach, with 19 instructors and 85 students from both prep and year seven in attendance.

Participant feedback

3.9 / 5
Average score of how much participants enjoyed the program

67%
of participants either 'liked' the program or 'liked it a lot'

96%
of participants could correctly identify the actions needed if they get in trouble in the water

91%
of participants could correctly identify signage signalling 'no swimming'

97%
of participants could correctly identify signage signalling to wear a lifejacket

11%
of participants could correctly identify all actions needed if caught in a rip current

What participants learnt from the program (n=114)

- I learnt about dangers in and around the water (71%)
- It taught me something new about water safety (70%)
- It made me think about being more careful around water (64%)
- I learnt that rivers can be dangerous, even when they look calm on top (54%)
- It taught me to always wear a lifejacket when on a boat, jet ski or kayak (50%)
- I learnt you should never go swimming or boating alone (35%)
- It made me plan ahead before starting water activities (32%)
- Nothing/ unsure (10%)
- Other (6%)

What participants will do differently post-program (n=114)

- I will be more careful when I am around water (75%)
- I will read the water safety signs when I visit a river, lake, creek or beach (61%)
- I won't go swimming alone (59%)
- I will swim between the red and yellow flags at beaches patrolled by lifesavers (57%)
- I will wear a lifejacket when boating, jet skiing and kayaking (55%)
- I will check how deep the water is in rivers, creeks or streams before I get in (55%)
- I won't go boating alone (47%)
- Nothing/ I will continue as usual/ unsure (9%)
- Other (6%)

What did participants enjoy?

- Boogie boarding
- Being in the water and swimming
- Nipper/surf boarding
- Lifesaving and rescue activities

What did participants not enjoy?

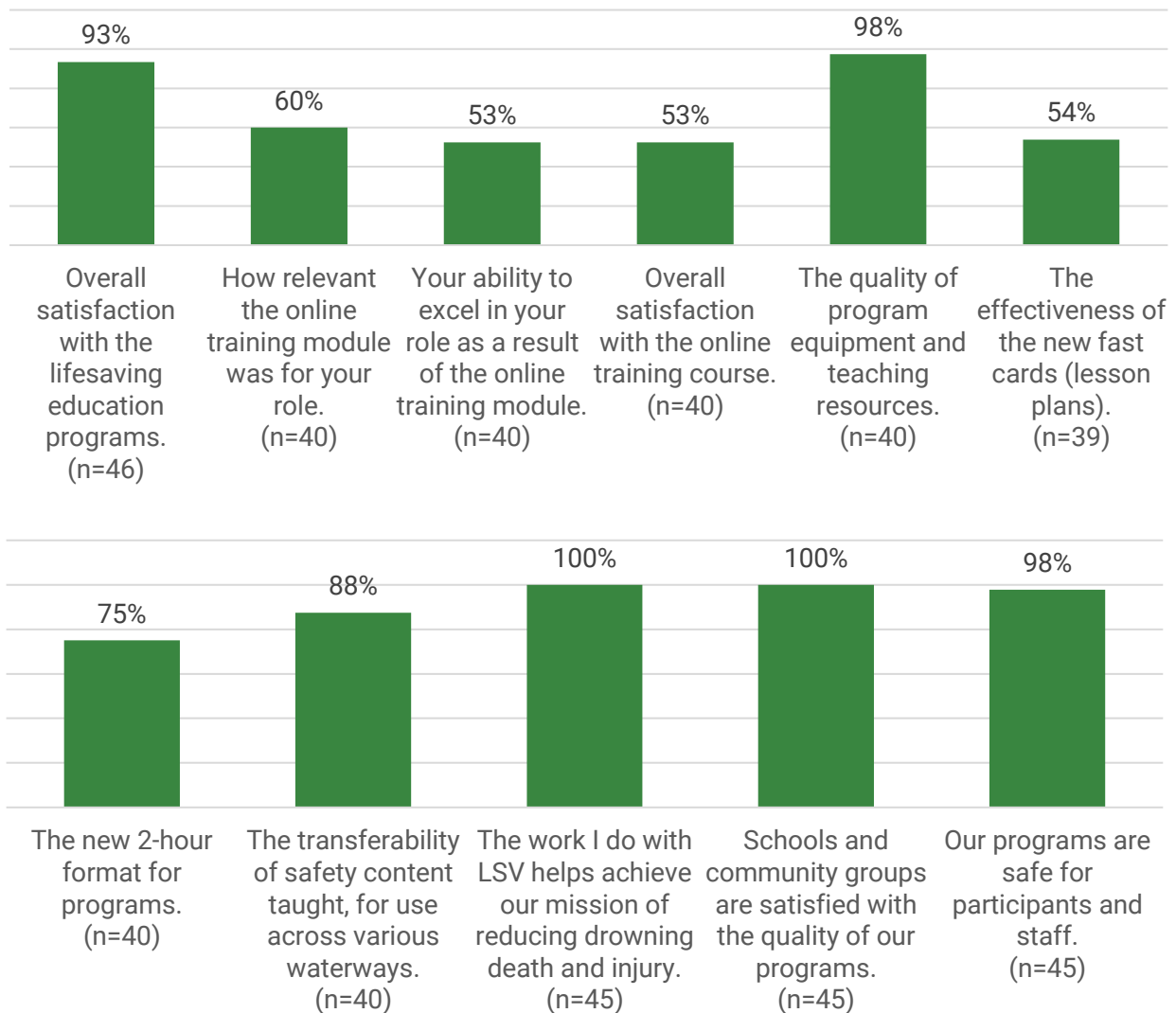
- Dry activities
- Not entering water/ being in water for short periods
- Entering water with shoes on
- Waiting/ too much talking

"The students and staff have spoken extremely highly about the program, lifeguards and overall organisation."
– Specialist school teacher

"[The instructors] were incredible in their approach, their professionalism as well as their delivery of the information. The students were engaged, challenged, and most importantly, walked away with valuable learnings."
– School teacher

Instructor feedback

Figure 6. Instructors who were satisfied or very satisfied with aspects of the LEP



What did instructors enjoy?



- Being part of an inclusive and supportive environment.
- Observing participants improve their water safety knowledge, skills and confidence in aquatic situations.
- Learning to educate participants from a variety of backgrounds and abilities, as well as undertaking professional development and personal growth.

What do instructors think could be improved?



- Increase the amount of 'shadow shifts' prior to sessions, including in various locations/waterways and for multiple programs.
- Equipment: provide a variety of lifejacket sizes for children for an appropriate fit, larger boards for secondary school students, and increase the availability of equipment for dry activities. Use buoys to mark safe zones in the water. Provide culturally appropriate swimwear, e.g., headscarves. Ensure damaged equipment is removed and replaced.

Observations

Safety precautions

- Instructors were prepared with an emergency plan.
- When using boogie boards, the students had individual turns with an instructor and stayed at wading height.
- Adherence to a 1:5 instructor-student ratio.
- Matching, brightly coloured rashies were worn by students for visibility.

Great instruction

- Teachers advised which students could not participate, instead of instructors, which was good for student-instructor rapport-building.
- There was strong teamwork demonstrated by instructors, e.g. taking turns speaking and assisting each other throughout.

Great organisation and engagement

- Participants were engaged throughout the duration of the program and enjoyed the variety of activities.
- The shorter timeframe (compared to previous years) enhanced engagement.
- Overall, the activities and sessions were well-organised and ran within the desired timeframe.

Considerations

- This program was designed for students older than prep, leading to the possibility that some information may not be retained, e.g., not knowing their location in an emergency.

Recommendations

1. Increase engagement of students, especially younger ones, through reducing the amount of talking and increasing practical efforts or reducing the time for sessions which require speaking.
2. As dry activities may need to be undertaken during periods of poor weather and beach conditions, reconsider how they may be run to enhance engagement and ensure relevance to water safety, including potentially purchasing equipment for this purpose.
3. Reconsider how to better utilise the online training portal to increase instructor satisfaction; or further, replace with practical, hands-on training or increased shadow shifts within different environments and alongside different demographics.
4. Aim to provide equipment which ensures comfort for students, including appropriately fitting lifejackets – especially considering that ill-fitting lifejackets can contribute to drowning – and culturally appropriate swimwear.

Surfing Victoria

Victorian Indigenous Surfing Program



Background

The Victorian Indigenous Surfing Program was one of the first programs funded under the PISBTW initiative, and has since set a standard for the implementation of successful culturally appropriate programs, especially for engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

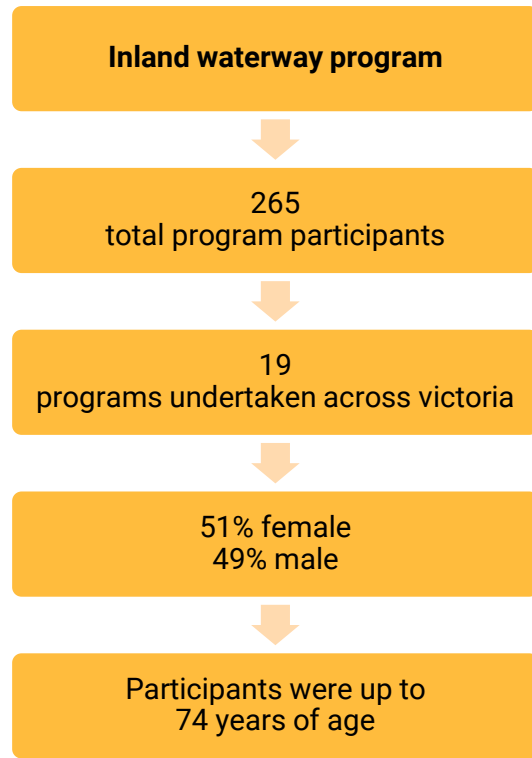
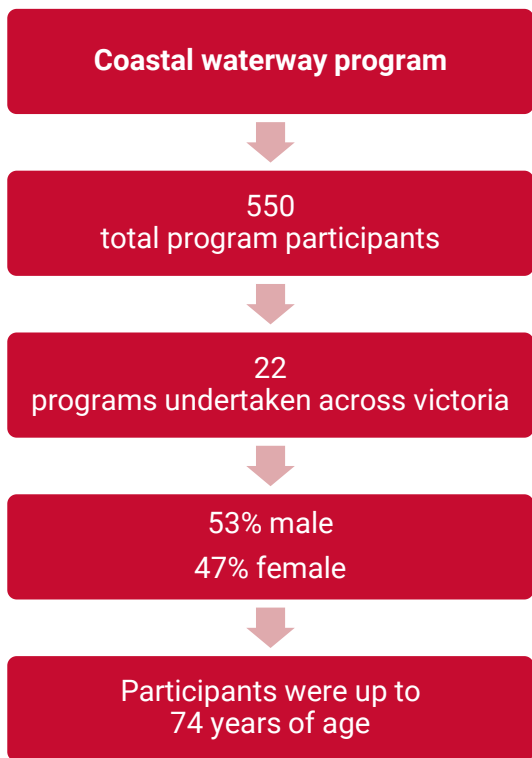
The nine-month long program is held across 10 locations within Victoria, and has been co-designed over the years with Indigenous communities (including Wadawurrung, Dhauwurd Wurrung and Gunaikurnai) to ensure that it is engaging and remains relevant to the target audience by incorporating culturally relevant teachings. The program aims to teach rip current identification and safe exiting a rip, water safety sign identification, performing surfboard rescues and “Respect the River” messaging at inland locations.

Data collection and analyses

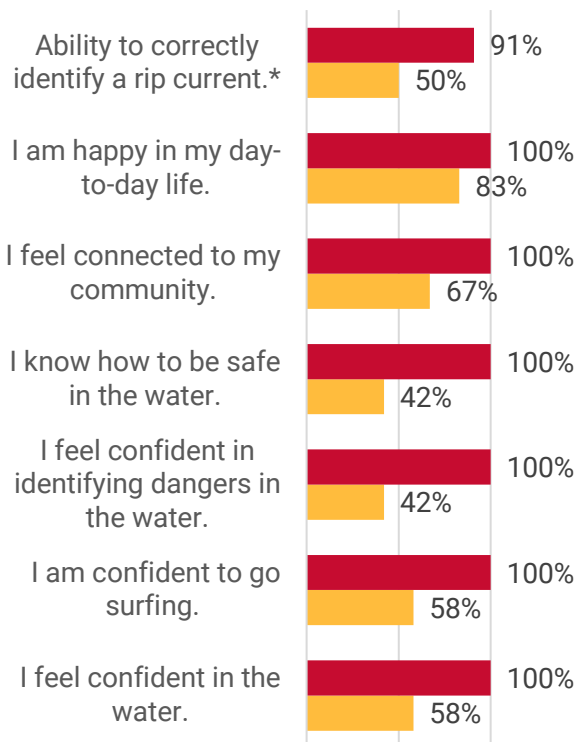
Data were collected from pre- and post-program surveys for each program iteration, which measured participants’ water safety knowledge, aquatic competence and confidence, and cultural and personal wellbeing. Agreement scores were measured from one to 10. Where scores do not equal 100%, data is unavailable.

Data were also collected post-program from both program participants and observers (e.g., instructors, organisational representatives of partnered organisations, and participants’ families). Observations were also made by LSV’s research and health promotion team at Bancoora Surf Life Saving Club.



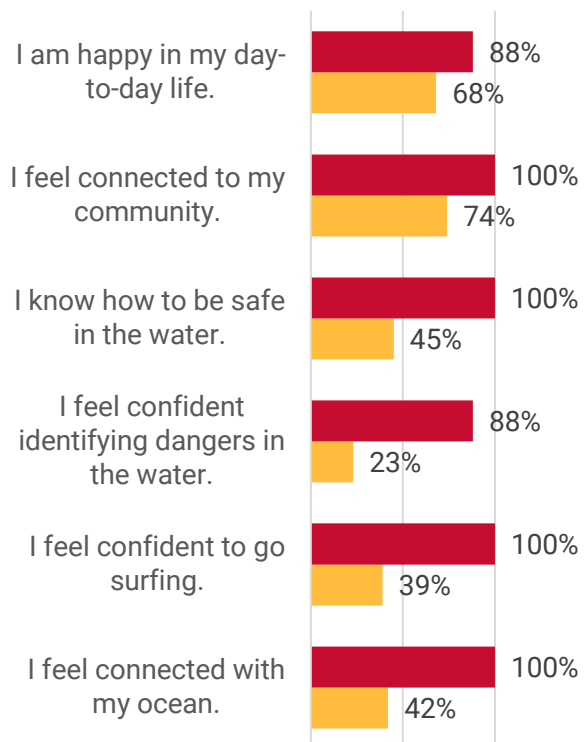


Percentage of participants who agreed/strongly agreed with the impacts of the coastal program



■ Post-program (n=11)
■ Pre-program (n=12)

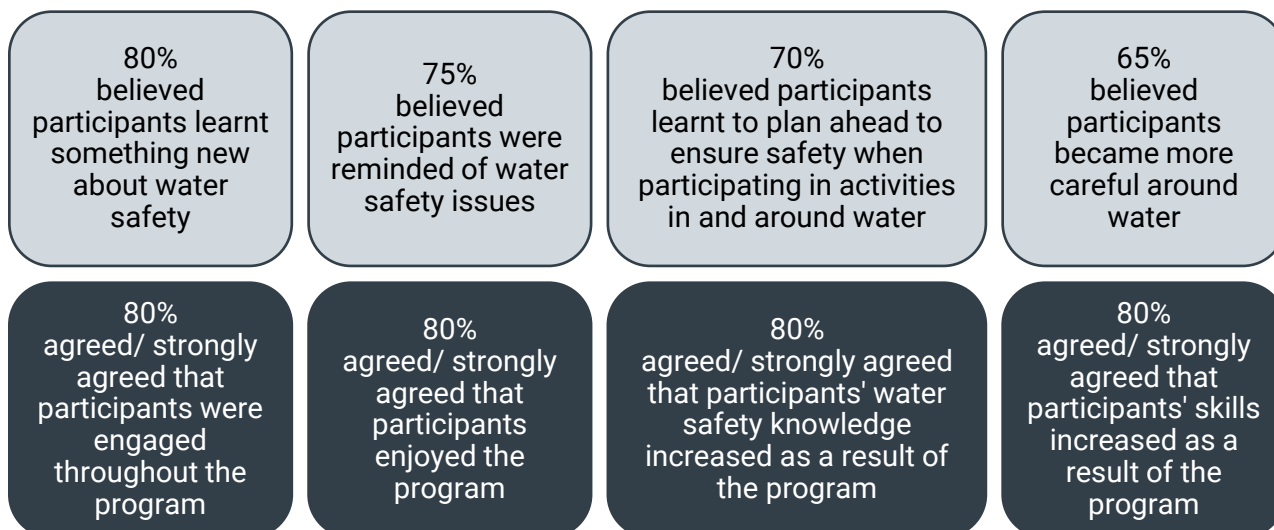
Percentage of participants who agreed/strongly agreed with the impacts of the inland program



■ Post-program (n=16)
■ Pre-program (n=31)

*Percentage based on total respondents who correctly identified an image of a rip current.

Observer feedback (n=20)



What did observers report the participants enjoyed?

- ⇒ Learning water safety and surfing skills and increasing confidence around water in a fun, inclusive and safe environment.
- ⇒ Making friends and forming connections with others, including strong instructor-participant rapport.
- ⇒ Appreciation for Surfing Vic travelling to program participants, instead of expecting participants to travel.

What could be improved?

- ⇒ Increase sessions by making them longer, have a longer season or a large community day.

Observations

- ⇒ Real-world learnings: Participant numbers were lower-than-average due to cold and windy weather and holiday-related commitments; however, this made for 1:1 participant: instructor ratio.
- ⇒ Safety: The pre-session safety talk was adapted to current weather conditions. Participants also wore branded rashies which aided in visibility.
- ⇒ Connection: One participant's parent stated that their child developed confidence in open-water environments, a love of the ocean and strong rapport with instructors: "[We] haven't missed a session, he loves it!".

Recommendations

Due to the continued success of the program, and any issues encountered being external factors which are unable to be controlled or may be unfeasible to address, no new recommendations are provided.

Background

Surfing Victoria's Multicultural Stand-Up Paddleboarding (SUPing) Program was designed to address the needs of multicultural communities within regional areas, within both coastal and inland waterway settings. The program is delivered to people from multicultural communities between the ages of 10 to 25 years, and aims to promote positive social interactions, increase water safety knowledge and awareness, and increase physical activity to positively impact program participants' health and wellbeing.

The 90-minute program has been co-designed with local community groups and community leaders to ensure that it remains relevant to the target audience by incorporating culturally relevant teachings. There are no expenses for program participants and the 'easy' nature of SUPing means that the program is accessible and safe for all abilities and skill levels. The program aims to teach an understanding of the impacts of and preparedness for water conditions, risks at inland and coastal waterways, open water hazards including rips and strong currents – as well as how to escape if caught in one – water safety sign identification and safety signals.

Data collection and analyses

Data were collected from pre- and post-program surveys for each program iteration, which measured participants' water safety knowledge, aquatic competence and confidence, and cultural and personal wellbeing. Agreement scores were measured from one to 10. Where scores do not equal 100%, data is unavailable.

Data were also collected post-program from both program participants and observers (e.g., instructors, organisational representatives of partnered organisations, and participants' families). Observations were also made by LSV's research and health promotion team at Geelong Waterfront.



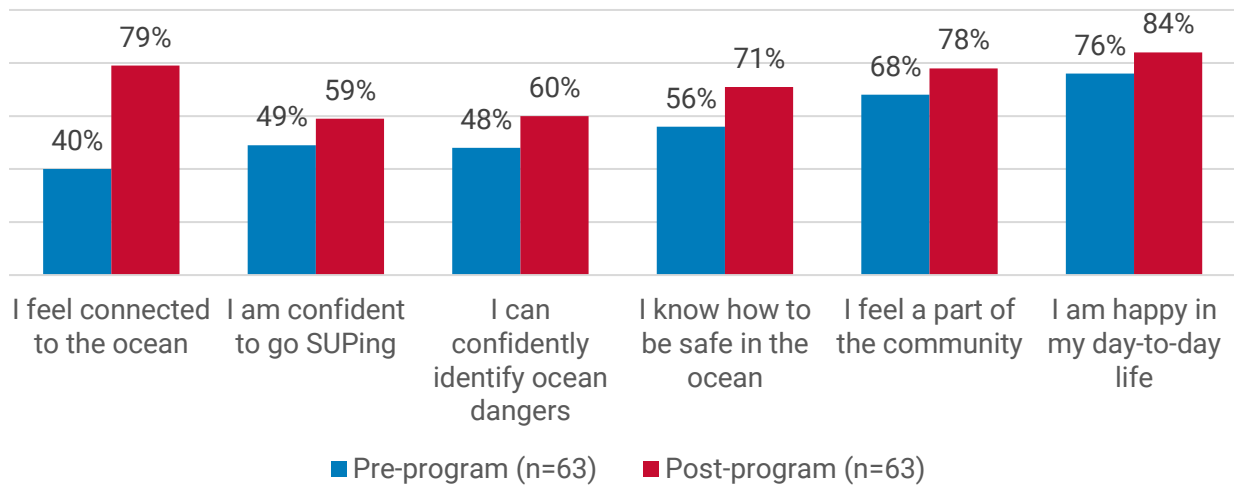
232
total program
participants

16
programs
undertaken across
victoria

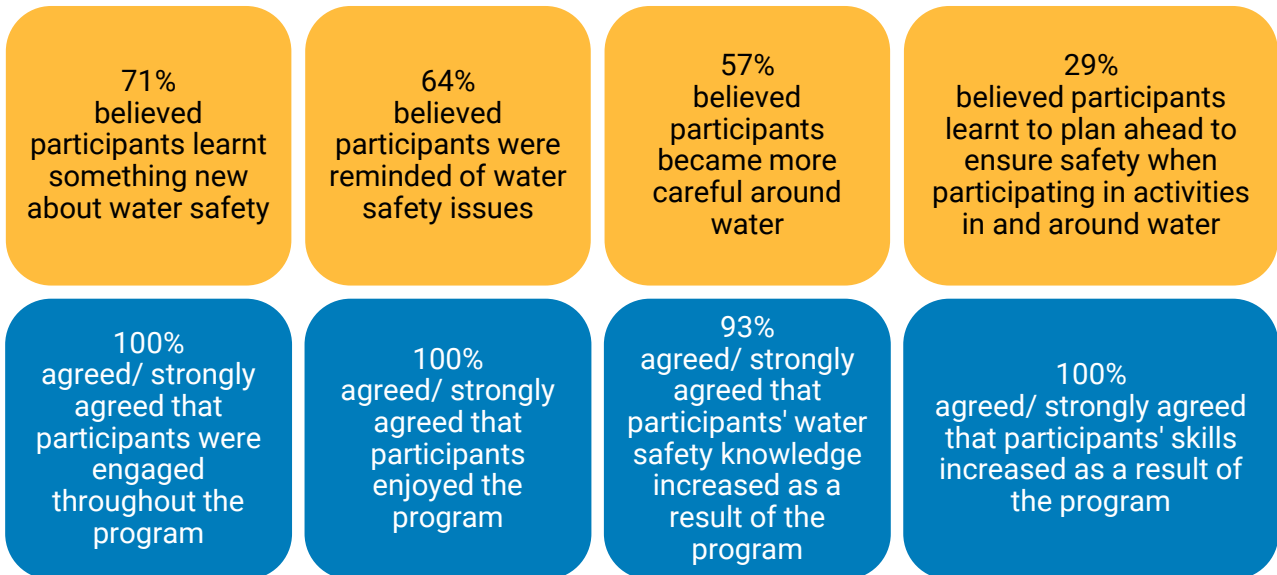
34% female
32% male
<1% non-binary

Participants ages
ranged from 5 to 25
years of age

Figure 7. Percentage of participants who agreed/ strongly agreed with each statement



Observer feedback (n=14)



What did observers report participants enjoyed?

- The program was fun and instructors were friendly.
- The program was inclusive of all backgrounds and abilities, and made the effort to localise programs for ease of access.
- Participants learning new skills (SUPing) and safety in new environments, and developing confidence.



What could be improved?

- Implementation of visual aids/ translated materials to improve participants' understanding.
- Earlier promotion of the program; or reconsidering time of year, e.g. people who partake in Ramadan cannot be in water during this time.
- Increase program time and longevity.

Observations

- ⇒ Many participants attended for the first time, and there were issues with people signing up and not attending. Transport was noted as a barrier to participation, and therefore having a van/ bus for an organised group made participation easier.
- ⇒ Many participants were from a multicultural youth program run by City of Greater Geelong and were newly arrived to Australia. The strong connections with local community organisations which were demonstrated are vital for the running of this program.
- ⇒ Language barriers were sometimes an issue; however, when the session began with safety debrief, e.g., what to do if in need of rescue and dry demonstration of paddle board use, participants seemed to understand expectations.
- ⇒ Instructors paddled alongside participants for safety, but autonomy was also encouraged. It was observed that the more confident participants became, the group would follow; this strong group cohesion is great for inclusivity, especially upon arrival to a new country.
- ⇒ Overall confidence in water noticeably increased after one session.
- ⇒ Participant quotes:
 - “I never do that [paddle boarding], but it is my first time so [I] really like it.”
 - “[The session] can help us to know to [be around] water...many people do not know how to swim so they can help us to know that.”
 - “The instructors were very friendly...[they] make it easy to communicate.”
 - “More advertising – I know people that will come.”
 - “Change age range [limit] to [include] 30, [as] you may not get young people.”



Recommendations

1. Increase promotional efforts, including through earlier promotion of the program.
2. Explore the potential to increase age limits to increase participation for older members within multicultural communities.
3. Explore the potential/need to incentivise participation, e.g., provide a free lifejacket for a certain number of sessions attended, or increase provision of transport.

Triathlon Australia



Club and community safety

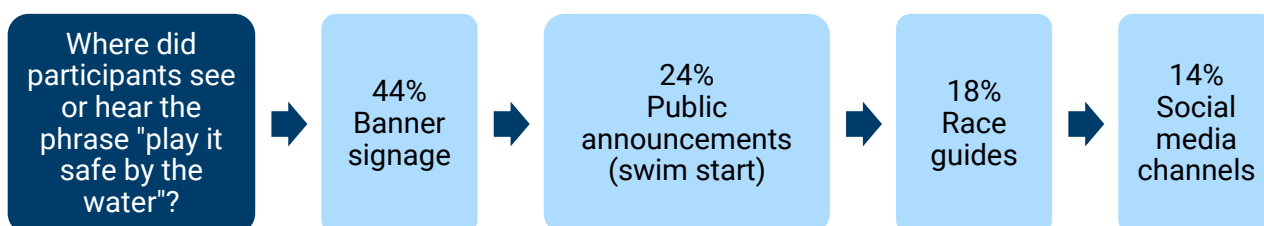
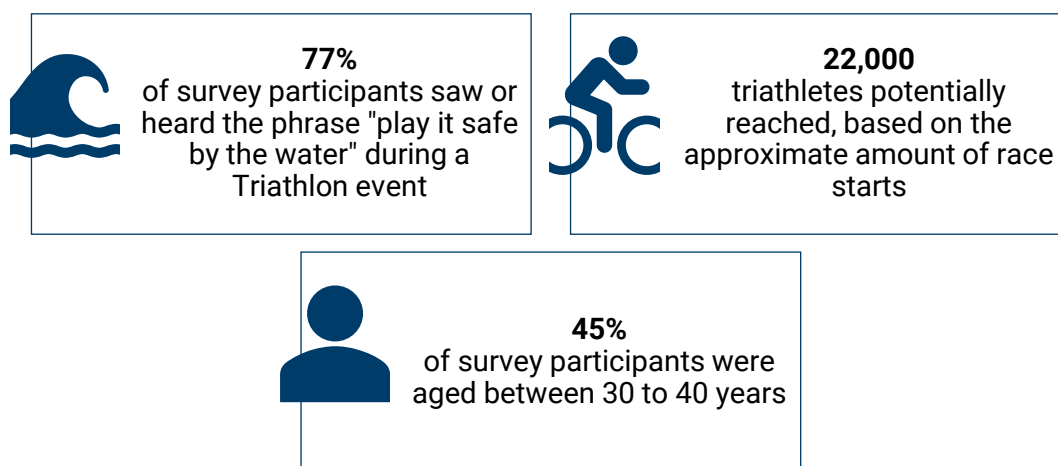
Triathlon Australia promote club and community safety through supporting Triathlon coaches and triathletes by assisting them to feel safe and confident in aquatic settings, such as open waterways (coastal and inland). They further aim to extend the education of water safety practices and identifying aquatic-related risks to entire triathlon club communities and their extended network of family and friends. As such, people aged 30 to 40 years were a key target group for this campaign, as many people in this age group may have children and/ or connections with other young families and/or connections with older adults, thereby creating a further 'flow-on' effect for messaging.

Aspects of this campaign included water safety and PISBTW-specific messaging at Triathlon carnivals, and the provision of tow floats to volunteers and members at 40 affiliated clubs, to provide visibility while swimming in coastal waters and inland waterways. Further, a presentation and slide deck were provided to clubs for water safety training sessions.

The following results were collected from a post-event feedback survey, as well through observations conducted by LSV's research and health promotion team at a 2XU triathlon event held near Elwood Life Saving Club.



Triathlete feedback



Observations

Inclusive and friendly event and atmosphere

- Participants came from metropolitan and regional areas, and included people aged 7+ years, and people with disabilities.
- Strong presence of industry partnerships throughout event – including stalls for organisations and presence of sporting organisations (including for people with disabilities) and schools.
- The staff and event facilitators were friendly and helpful.

Strong promotion of water safety messaging

- PISBTW signs were positioned at the swim entry with regular announcements made by an event facilitator, such as “play it safe by the water” and “even if you’re a strong swimmer, you need to be cautious”.
- Unsinkable guy (“Bobby”) activation was held with many participants taking photos with Bobby.
- PISBTW merchandise were provided as prizes, including legionnaire hats for children and Inflatable Guy car scents for adult participants.

Strong safety considerations

- When ocean conditions are poor, people are given the choice to swim; however in the event of poor water quality or extreme weather conditions, the continuation of the swimming event will be decided by the Event Director (collaborating with water safety officials), with continual communication to participants ensured.
- Swim entry was at Elwood Surf Life Saving Club, and lifesavers were ready with lifesaving equipment during swim portions.

Triathlon Australia would like to increase:

- Participation from culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and
- Participation from ‘everyday’ people who may have less advanced equipment or who may not consider themselves to be ‘athletes’.

Recommendations

1. Improve promotional efforts for people to understand that participation is not limited to pro-athletes, and that anyone can join with basic equipment; or, alternatively, consider events designed to be inclusive of amateur athletes or people without equipment.
2. Improve promotional efforts towards people from culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in a way that tailors promotional messaging for these cohorts.

Instagram ▾



yarratri



Liked by pnev_17 and 25 others

yarratri Feeling safer in the water thanks to the tow buoys provide by @tri_victoria as part of the play it safe by the water campaign. #zone3official

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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