

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland





**Michael D. Higgins,  
President of Ireland  
Patron of Water Safety Ireland**

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# Chair's Statement



On behalf of all our members, I am honoured to present Water Safety Ireland's Annual Report for 2024. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the dedicated members of our Area Committees, Commissions, and Working Groups for their outstanding contributions throughout the year.

A warm welcome to the newly appointed Council members, nominated by Minister Heather Humphreys, TD, we look forward to your insight and leadership. I also wish to express sincere gratitude to the staff at Head Office, whose tireless work behind the scenes continues to drive our mission forward.

Throughout 2024, Water Safety Ireland volunteers have been actively engaged across the country, delivering vital training in swimming, lifesaving, basic life support, and rescue skills, while also promoting water safety awareness within local communities. This year, WSI proudly issued 89,732 certificates, including 2,563 awarded to individuals who qualified as lifeguards.

I commend the unwavering dedication of our Water Safety Area Committees and our summer and winter course organisers, whose commitment ensures the next generation of lifesavers are well trained and prepared to serve as lifeguards at pools and open water sites nationwide.

During the summer season, lifeguards employed by Local Authorities made an extraordinary impact, rescuing 202 people from drowning, administering first aid to 5,129 individuals, and safely reuniting 152 lost children with their guardians at lifeguarded open water locations. Their professionalism and quick response continue to be a vital safeguard for communities throughout Ireland.

The fourth World Drowning Prevention Day was marked on July 25th, centred around the theme "Anyone can drown, no one should". Water Safety Ireland volunteers joined our global partners in commemorating the day with lifeguards, families, children, and iconic landmarks across the country turning blue in solidarity. Ireland has been a proud and active participant in this global initiative, and we deeply appreciate the efforts of everyone who helped raise awareness, honouring those lost to drowning and reinforcing our collective commitment to prevention.

It was another outstanding year for Lifesaving Sport, both nationally and internationally. The WSI-Clare Ladies team were honoured with the prestigious President's Trophy in recognition of their exceptional performance. On the global stage, Team Ireland achieved remarkable success at the World Lifesaving Championships in Australia, a testament to the dedication, skill, and teamwork of both our athletes and coaches.

Throughout the year, we continued to make strong progress in delivering our Five-Year Strategic Development Plan (2023–2027), which provides a clear roadmap for the work of Water Safety Ireland. This plan is closely aligned with Ireland's National Drowning Prevention Strategy (2018–2027), ensuring our efforts contribute meaningfully to long-term national goals. As we explore new and innovative ways to address water safety challenges and promote the safe and enjoyable use of our beautiful waterways, I encourage you to be part of this journey. You can learn more by reading both strategy documents, available on our website.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

In 2024, Water Safety Ireland maintained a strong and visible presence across the media landscape, particularly during National Water Safety Awareness Week. This year's campaign centred around the powerful message: "Memorable Moments Are Made Possible by Practising Water Safety." Through coordinated efforts, we delivered practical, lifesaving advice to the public using both traditional and digital platforms, ensuring that our message reached the most at-risk groups across the country.

Tragically, provisional figures indicate that 78 people lost their lives to drowning in 2024. On behalf of Water Safety Ireland, I extend our deepest sympathies to the families and friends who have been affected by these heartbreaking losses. In 2024, we published the National Drowning Report 2017 - 2021, a comprehensive analysis of the factors contributing to drownings in Ireland. I encourage you to read this important report, available on our website. By understanding the circumstances behind these tragedies, we gain vital insights that guide the development of targeted and effective interventions. With the support of robust data, we remain committed to strategies that, I sincerely hope, will help sustain the encouraging downward trend in drownings across the country.

In closing, on behalf of the organisation, I wish to extend our deepest condolences to the families of the valued members we sadly lost during the year. We are profoundly grateful for their contributions to our shared mission of creating a safer society - one in which lives are protected from the tragedy of drowning. I would also like to offer my sincere thanks to all our dedicated members for their continued service, and to warmly welcome those who joined us over the past year. As we look to the future, I do so with quiet hope that the encouraging downward trend in drownings will continue.

Thank you all for your unwavering dedication, compassion, and commitment to saving lives. Together, we are making a difference. Together, we will bring drownings down.



**Clare McGrath**

Chair,  
Water Safety Ireland



# Vision

A Water Loving People where Safety is Second Nature.

# What We Do

Water Safety Ireland (WSI) is the statutory, voluntary body, and registered charity established to promote water safety and reduce drownings in Ireland. Our focus is on public awareness and education. Tragically, in each of the five years from 2018 to 2022, an average of 116 people died from drowning. We strive to reduce these fatalities by changing attitudes and behaviors so that our aquatic environments can be enjoyed with confidence and safety.

## Education

- An education syllabus that teaches swimming, lifesaving, water confidence, safety, survival, rescue skills and basic life support.
- Courses are provided nationwide to the general public and also to children as part of the primary school curriculum in classrooms, pools and open water nationwide. Many qualifications such as our Pool and Beach Lifeguarding Awards are recognised internationally.
- Beach Lifeguards are trained and tested by our examiners for the Local Authorities prior to the annual summer season each year.
- Trained Lifesavers compete in provincial and national Lifesaving Championships and at International level.
- Risk Assessments are conducted on bathing areas and waterways nationwide that may pose a particular risk to the public, in order to make them safer.
- Community Inshore Rescue Boat crews are trained and associated VAT refunds are administered.
- "Water Safety Awareness" training is provided for those working in the public and private sector near aquatic environments.







### Promotion

- Research, analysis and publication of drowning statistics that inform policy and enable effective targeting of those at risk of drowning.
- National and local media are engaged to encourage conversations that encourage a public awareness of coastal and inland water safety issues.
- Publications, courses, advice and campaigns that promote water safety at all aquatic environments, so that the public adopts the necessary behaviours to stay safe.
- Supporting the work of Water Safety Ireland members and those volunteering and commercially delivering swimming, lifesaving and basic life support training.
- A National Water Safety Awards Ceremony celebrates voluntary service and includes the “Seiko Just-In-Time” Rescue Awards and other awards that acknowledge various partnerships that promote water safety at national and local level.

### Partnership

- Local Authorities, state agencies, coroners and private enterprises on matters relating to water safety and the provision of Public Rescue Equipment and Lifeguarding locations nationwide.
- The Marine Safety Communications Working Group and the Irish Marine Search and Rescue Committee to promote maritime safety.
- A range of organisations to examine interventions that address the high number of drownings by suicide.
- Conferences, lectures and demonstrations to Local Authorities, Government Agencies, NGO’s, schools, colleges, corporate entities, and members of the public.

# 2024 in Review



**89,732**

Certificates Issued



Summer Week  
locations in **23** Counties



**48,744**

Primary Aquatics Water  
Safety certificates issued  
to primary school pupils



**516**

Mentions in national and local media



**55**

Waterway Risk  
Assessments completed



**32**

SEIKO Just In Time Award and  
Rescue Appreciation Award  
recipients honoured for saving  
19 lives at risk of drowning



**152**

lost children found and reunited by  
Lifeguards with their guardians



**8**

Bronze medals won at the  
Junior European Championships  
by Team Ireland



# Water Safety Ireland Council



## Clare McGrath

Clare is an active Water Safety Ireland instructor, examiner, tutor and international referee and has worked as a referee at the highest level at European and World competitions. Clare has been involved in the organisation of Regional and National lifesaving competitions, both pool and beach for 20 years. She works with Clare County Council, as the Water Safety Development Officer, within the Environment Section.



## Philip Keleghan

Philip Keleghan is from County Wicklow and has been involved in Water Safety and other aquatic activities for over forty years. He is an active Water Safety Instructor, Examiner, and Swimming Tutor. In 2024 he served as the Vice Chair of the Council of Water Safety Ireland and the Chair of the WSI Technical Commission.



## Tom O'Mahony

Tom O'Mahony lives in Dunboyne, Co. Meath. He is a retired civil servant and served as Secretary General of the Department of Transport and Sport. In a previous role in the Department of the Environment he was involved in the statutory establishment of Water Safety Ireland, then Irish Water Safety, in 1999. He is very active in the fields of sport (where he is a past President of St Patrick's Athletic FC) and music (as a recording artist under the stage name Tommy Keyes).



## Simon McGarrigle

Simon lives in Galway, Ireland, with his wife and 2 young children. He works in a Sales & Marketing role for Finol Oils. Originally from Donegal, Simon developed a passion for water safety from an early age. He was a Lifeguard, Water Safety Ireland Instructor, Pool Lifeguard provider, IRB Crew, Coxswain & Instructor, as well as a lifesaving sport coach and team manager in Donegal. He also instructed WSI Dublin while living there. Simon has competed, coached, and refereed nationally, and has also served as team manager and referee at European and World Championship lifesaving events. He has over ten years experience organising pool and beach competitions nationally, Simon is also a former member of the International Life Saving Federation of Europe Sports Commission. In 2024 he served as Chair of the WSI Sports Commission.



### Natalie McGuinness

Natalie McGuinness is a strategy and marketing professional with over 20 years of experience in professional services, education and technology. Currently, she works as a marketing director in Dublin. She previously worked for UCD and Vodafone in Ireland, the UK and Asia. She is dedicated to lifelong learning and is a three time graduate from UCD holding a BA, MBA and Diploma in Corporate Governance. Natalie also works as an Independent Non-Executive Director with the Dublin Chamber and Chambers Ireland boards.



### Leo Mahon

Leo is from Co. Kildare and has been involved in Water Safety for over 30 years. As current Chair of the Education Commission, Leo is spearheading the delivery of education programmes to schools throughout Ireland. He previously served on a number of Commissions and Working Groups and was a founding developer of ringbuoys.ie which allows members of the public to report missing and damaged ringbuoys. In addition, Leo has been committed to outdoor water safety training through the development of the first Inland water safety training venue at Blessington, Co. Wicklow. He is currently an active Water Safety Instructor and Examiner, as well as the PRO of Water Safety Ireland – Kildare.



### Dervla Quinn

Dervla is a practicing solicitor with over 30 years' experience. She has been a member of the Residential Tenancies Board disputes committee since its inception in 2004. She served on the Board of the Private Residential Tenancies Board from 2004 to 2008. She is a qualified tax consultant and a member of the Institute of Taxation since 1994. Dervla has been heavily involved in her local community and is a year-round sea swimmer, active in the Greystones, Co. Wicklow swim community. In 2018 she was rescued from the sea which inspired an interest in promoting water safety.



### Christine Moloney

Christine is the CEO of Leisure World since 2001. She strategically leads, directs, and manages the six Leisure World sites on behalf of Cork City Council, ensuring the delivery of quality and value for money services. She has a wealth of experience in public sector service provision, strategy development, corporate governance, strategic HR, financial and internal controls, and a background in facilities management.



### Mary Plunkett

Mary has worked in financial services for over 25 years across a diverse base of institutions in Banking, General Insurance, Life and Pensions and Funds. Working primarily within pillars of Strategic Planning and Governance, Mary has built vast experience having worked with leading financial services clients at executive level. Mary holds a Diploma in Company Direction with Distinction from the Institute of Directors, an MSc Investment & Treasury from Dublin City University and is a qualified accountant. Mary also holds the Association of Compliance Officers in Ireland leading qualification and is a qualified Data Protection Officer. Working in Risk management & Compliance for many years, Mary has in-depth experience in design of Risk & Compliance Governance Frameworks, monitoring upstream regulation, Compliance Monitoring Programmes, Compliance Roadmaps, setting Risk Appetite and Risk Policy and establishing governance programmes to manage same. Mary has valuable experience in engaging with diverse stakeholder groups to deliver transformation programmes, cultural change, offshoring, management of 3rd party suppliers and contractual commitments.



### Bernie Gaines

Bernie a long-time member of Water Safety Ireland, with 37 (and counting) years of experience teaching and encouraging anybody in need where she can. Starting her journey as a participant, to then moving on to be an instructor, swim teacher, beach/pool lifeguard tutor and provider. Bernie immersed herself in many areas of water safety, to included deck manager, Dublin committee member, sports officer, referee, beach and pool lifeguard provider, swim tutor, disability instructor, examiner, summer weeks co-ordinator, Dublin DLP and current Dublin Chair. Bernie is passionate about Water Safety Awareness and Water Safety Ireland's mission to encourage everyone to enjoy our aquatic environments safely.



### Patrick O'Grady

Patrick is from Co. Clare and is an active member of WSI for over 20 years. He is currently a member of the Water Safety Clare area committee having previously held the position of Chairperson. He is actively involved in all aspects of Water Safety. He is a current Water Safety instructor, coach, referee and Inshore Rescue Boat (IRB) Senior Tutor. He is currently the chairperson of the Rescue IRB commission.



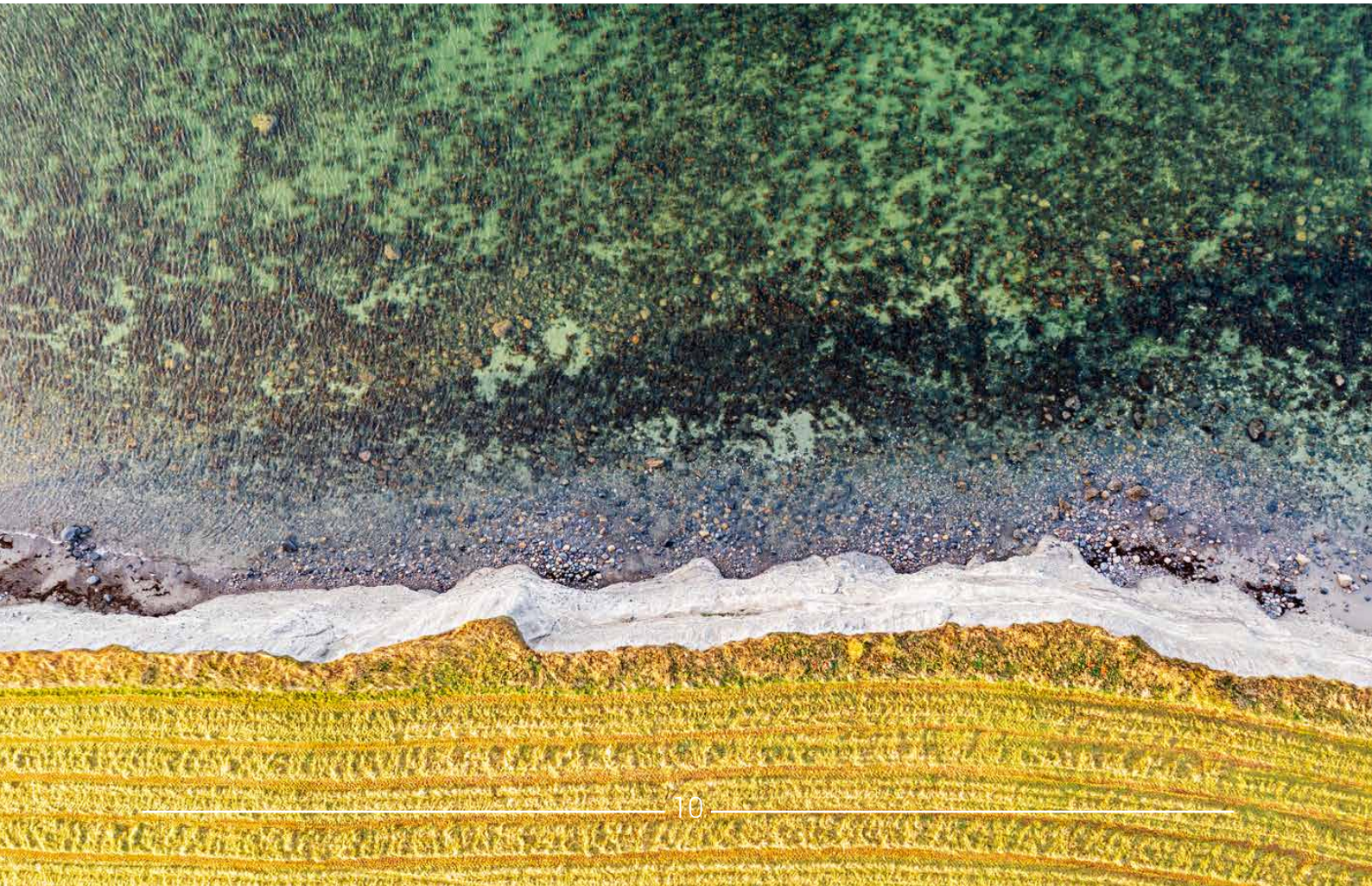


### James O'Sullivan

James has, since a child been immersed in Water Safety Ireland activities. From a very young age, under the guidance of his mother and Life Governor Dolores O'Sullivan, James completed all of the WSI accreditation in the sea in Tramore. After completing 'Intermediate', 'Senior' and the 'Survival' qualifications in the mid 1980's James registered to become a Water Safety Ireland preliminary instructor under the guidance of Sonny Condon and Frank Nolan in Waterford. As a result of travelling for education and abroad for employment James gained several valuable skills working in large multinationals such as Accenture and PA Consulting. James is currently the Head of Innovation and Commercialisation at the South East Technological University.

In his capacity as a senior executive, James holds a number of current board positions; such as at Propelor and the Irish Knowledge Transfer Association. In the last 15 years James, working hand in hand with his sister Lola O'Sullivan, has reinvigorated his passion for water safety activities. In particular James has been instrumental to the success and development of lifesaving sports activities within WSI-Waterford, providing administrative support and coaching the Nipper and Junior teams.

James has also competed for Waterford in the Master's team and regularly medals at both the open water and pool competitions. James won three masters medals in Italy at the 2019 European Surf lifesaving competition. He is passionate about supporting Water Safety Ireland's endeavours and brings to Council's strategic planning, a strong commercial and governance perspective.





# Council Meetings 2024

## Attendance Record

In addition to the Council meetings, members may have also attended Commission meetings, conferences, exhibitions, and other water safety events throughout the year on behalf of the WSI Council. As of 31 December, the Council had 5 (50%) female and 5 (50%) male members, with three positions vacant. The Council therefore meets the Government target of a minimum of 40% representation of each gender in the membership of State Boards.

<b>Clare McGrath</b>	6
<b>Philip Keleghan</b>	6
<b>Tom O'Mahony</b>	6
<b>Leo Mahon</b>	4
<b>Simon McGarrigle</b>	6
<b>Dervla Quinn</b>	5
<b>Patrick O'Grady</b>	3 (Commenced June 1st)
<b>Bernie Gaines</b>	3 (Commenced June 1st)
<b>James O'sullivan</b>	4 (Commenced June 1st)
<b>Natalie McGuinness</b>	6
<b>Mary Plunkett</b>	4
<b>Christine Moloney</b>	5

## Water Safety Area Committees

The organisation has thirty Water Safety Area Committees, arranged almost on a county basis plus the Defence Forces and the Garda Síochána Water Safety Area Committees. Each Committee expedites a programme of events and courses to cover their respective jurisdictions. In addition to delivering water safety promotional programmes and demonstrations at schools, colleges, businesses, exhibitions and community events, Committees deliver an extensive programme of year-round pool-based water safety sessions and in the summertime expand this teaching to beach, lake and river water safety sessions.

The official membership structure is of a voluntary nature with over five thousand members nationwide. Membership operates on a number of different levels: Life Governors, Examiners, Trainee Examiners, Tutors, Instructors, Trainee Instructors and Non-Technical Volunteer Organisers. Each Local Authority has a Water Safety Development Officer who is a member of the Water Safety Ireland Area Committee.

Their efforts to promote water safety ensures that communities nationwide are instilled with the skills, attitudes and behaviours that are necessary to be water safety aware.



# Water Safety Ireland – Staff

- **Joanne Walsh**, CEO
- **Roger Sweeney**, Deputy CEO & Marketing Manager
- **Joan Harte**, Financial & Office Manager
- **Jocelyn Cunningham**, Events and Courses Administrator and Risk Assessment Co-Ordinator
- **Alison Elstone**, Finance Administrator & Garda Vetting Liaison
- **Frank Hughes**, Business Development Executive
- **Ciara Gleeson**, Education Development Executive
- **Rosie O'Regan**, Education Officer
- **David Fitzpatrick**, Technical Officer
- **Padraig Judge**, Marketing Executive (January – September 2024)
- **Paul McGowan**, Marketing Executive
- **Jennifer O'Neil**, Board Secretary, HR & Compliance Officer
- **David Ruch**, Data Officer
- **Alanna Scully**, Volunteer Manager & Garda Vetting Liaison
- **Hannah Burke**, Senior Office Administrator

Water Safety Ireland employees participated in 330 hours of training activities in 2024.



## National Office

Water Safety Ireland, The Long Walk, Galway, H91 F602

## Auditors

Comptroller & Auditor General 3A Mayor Street Upper Dublin 1

## Internal Auditors

Moore Ireland– Appointed in November 2023  
Governance, Risk and Assurance  
Ulysses House,  
Foley Street  
Dublin 1, Ireland

## Bankers

Bank of Ireland, Mainguard Street, Galway

## Solicitors

Sheehan & Co. Solicitors  
16 Merchants Road, Galway





# Water Safety Ireland – Commissions

## The Technical Commission

**Philip Keleghan**  
**Patrick O'Grady**  
**Christine Moloney**  
**James O'Sullivan**  
**Simon McGarrigle**  
**Leo Mahon**  
**David Fitzpatrick**

## Duties:

- Co-ordinate and monitor the work of all Technical Commissions
- Review all Technical Commission recommendations and forward as appropriate all suitable recommendations to Council for approval
- Review all WSI Lifesaving syllabi & publications
- Oversee the arrangements for WSI Examiner's and Member's Conferences as required
- Identify and prioritise the new projects with Commissions



National Pool Lifesaving Championships 2024, UL Arena

## Audit, Risk & HR Commission:

**Tom O'Mahony**  
**(Finished December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024)**  
**Tom Keating**  
**Evan Duggan (Finished September 17, 2024)**  
**Lorcan Maule**  
**Mary Plunkett**  
**Philip Keleghan (Joined October 2024)**  
**Joan Harte**  
**Jennifer O'Neil**  
**Joanne Walsh**

## Duties:

- Monitoring Expenditure and Income
- Monitor standards of Governance of WSI activities
- Internal Financial Controls
- Risk Management
- Oversight and management of Internal Audits
- Oversee the management of External Audits
- HR Matters appropriate to Council
- Approve all attendance at National & International meetings and conferences

### Rescue and Inshore Rescue Boats Commission:

**Patrick O'Grady - Chair**

**Valerie Stundon**

**Ronnie Horan**

**Breda Collins - (Joined June 2024)**

**Kevin McCloskey**

**Graham Kerr**

**Colm Dempsey**



### Duties:

- Develop and implement a strategy for the Promotion of Blue Flag safety standards and other aquatic environmental issues
- Oversee the Management of Risk Assessments at local, national & international level
- Implement a programme of risk assessments in swimming pools adhering to Pool Safety Guidelines
- Manage the VAT Exemption Inspections as per S.I. 249 of 2013
- Development of a skilled trainer base to facilitate the Training of CRBI personnel in rescue on inland and maritime waters
- Development of a Inshore rescue syllabus in co-operation with CRBI.
- Liaise with Community Rescue Boats Ireland. Carry out usage tests on rescue equipment & review documentation
- Oversee the management of the Open Water Safety Awareness courses
- Develop a syllabus for training lifeguards in the use of IRB's and other power craft
- Arrange training courses for lifeguards in the use of IRB's
- Arrange rescue boat handling courses for WSI members
- Develop and deliver a syllabus to train WSI members as Rescue Boat Trainers
- Manage National & International IRB Competitions
- Arrange for safety cover at all WSI and ILS events & competitions where such cover is required.
- Organise VHF Radio short range courses for WSI members
- Review all relevant syllabus items annually.
- To collaborate with the HQ Marketing and Business development team in relation to selection criteria and proposals for recipients of WSI's annual recognition and rescue awards.



### Sport Commission:

**Simon McGarrigle – Chair**  
**Kate O'Donovan**  
**Caroline Bentley**  
**Daniel Wrafter**  
**Alison Deane – (Joined March 2024)**  
**James Hassey – (Finished July 2024)**



### Duties:

- Promote and develop lifesaving sport in Ireland
- Improve liaison with Swim Ireland in relation to our NGB funding
- Improve liaison with the Federation of Irish Sport
- Improve liaison with Coaching Ireland
- Manage International and National Competitions
- Facilitate Training of Coaches, Referees and Officials.
- Appoint Coaches, Referees and Officials for competitions.
- Ensure all WADA regulations are enforced for our athletes
- Recommend Sports Equipment
- Manage International Life Saving Sport & Competitions
- Liaison with the Olympic Council of Ireland
- Draw up procedures for all activities and competitions
- Review all relevant syllabus items annually.





### Lifeguarding Skills & Syllabus Development Commission:

Leo Mahon (Chair )

Graham Malone

Pauline Jordan

Paul Murphy

Shane O'Brien

Sean O'Keeffe

David Fitzpatrick



### Duties:

- The promotion of efficiency and standardisation of the Lifeguard Service
- Develop and implement a strategy for the improvement of national standards for Lifeguards
- Oversee all matters relating to the provision and training of Lifeguards (Pool, Beach, River)
- Recommend and publish national standards for all lifesaving equipment
- Develop and implement a national standard for the provision of instruction in water safety, rescue, resuscitation, and recovery skills
- Ensure European Resuscitation Council guidelines are adhered to by our membership
- Liaison with PHECC WG
- European Qualification Framework in Lifeguarding
- Implement training in Critical Incident Stress Management suitable for WSI members
- Liaise with the Rescue Commission on the implementation on the Swimming Pool risk assessments programme.
- Review all relevant syllabus items annually.





### Education Commission:

**James O'Sullivan - Chair**

**Leo Mahon**

**Matthew Campell**

**Philip Dorian**

**Caroline Casey**

**Ashling Nesbitt (also the WSI National Designated Liaison Person)**

**Sinead Weldon**

**Ciara Gleeson**

**Rosie O'Regan**



### Duties:

- Promotion of measures, including the advancement of education, related to the prevention of accidents in the aquatic environment
- Maintain and develop training and water safety awareness programmes within the Irish Educational System.
- Develop and implement Transition Year water safety programme.
- PAWS and Hold Hands: monitor and track and promote
- Liaise with the Department of Education on the implementation of the Leaving Certificate programme.
- Develop and implement Teacher Training Courses
- Development of further QQI awards
- Review and update all Children's welfare, protection & educational documents
- Arrange seminars for Designated Liaison Persons
- Liaise with the Dept of Education to roll out water safety awareness training programmes
- Manage, monitor, and enforce best practices in accordance with Children First and our own Code of Ethics for children and all relevant legislation pertaining to child welfare and protection
- Review and update the National Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children & National Volunteer Policies



### Swimming Commission:

**Christine Moloney – Chair – (Finished December 2024)**

**Deirdre Webster**

**Brid Graham**

**Amelia Reilly**

**Darren Ryan**

**Breda Collins (Finished June 2024)**

**David Fitzpatrick**



### Duties:

- Oversee the provision of instruction in swimming as a key element of the teaching of lifesaving
- Develop and implement a strategy for increasing the delivery of WSI swimming awards and the number of swimming teachers
- Develop a strategy to improve the teaching of water safety and lifesaving to individuals with disabilities.
- Oversee the provision of training and certification of Swimming Teachers and Swimming Tutors to National Standards
- Liaise with the Education Commission on matters relating to swimming teaching and water safety awareness
- Represent WSI on IFSTA and the White Flag Jury
- Evaluate the number of Swim Certificates in WSI and review all swimming related documentation
- Liaise with the Rescue Commission on the implementation of a Swimming Pool Risk Assessments programme.
- Review all relevant syllabus items annually.







### Marketing Commission:

**Natalie McGuinness – Chair**

**Member – WSI Marketing Manager and Deputy CEO**

**Member – Aidan Collins**

**Member – WSI Marketing Executive**

**Member – Chief Executive Officer**



### Duties:

- Assist in producing the marketing and promotional material as outlined within the S.I., Strategic Development Plan & Business Plan.
- Assist in sourcing forms of sponsorship.
- Assist with the development of internal WSI brand awareness.
- Assist in the marketing of the WSI Brand externally.
- Support the development of Standards for and implementation of standard merchandise – certificates, etc.
- Support the branding standardisation and publication of Books, Manuals, Leaflets, Posters.
- Manage the strategy for Press releases & ensure that WSI is well represented at exhibitions countrywide.
- Liaise with RoSPA & the Marine Safety Working Group.
- Develop and implement strategy for the Promotion of public awareness of Water Safety.
- Assist in organising National Ceremonies, Conferences & Events.
- Represent WSI at LAMA Awards.
- Develop and implement strategy for the Promote the wearing of Lifejackets.
- Provide Council with an annual analysis of drowning statistics with recommendations for strategic changes.
- Publish a Dress Code appropriate to WSI volunteers and staff.
- Assist in the management of the WSDO's Conference.

# Media Partnerships 2024

We are very grateful to the provincial and national media for helping us to target at-risk groups. Fifteen press releases were issued throughout the year and WSI received 516 mentions.

## PRESS RELEASES

- December Press Release 2024
- October Bank Holiday Press Release Irish Translation
- WSI National Awards Ceremony 2024 Irish Translation
- World Lifesaving Championships 2024 Results
- Team Ireland Excel In World Lifesaving Championships
- World Lifesaving Championships
- August Bank Holiday Weekend
- Water Safety Ireland issues National Drowning Report
- Seven children drowned last year: Take Seven Minutes to Save a Life
- Water Safety Ireland commences National Water Safety Awareness Week
- June Bank Holiday Weekend Press Release 2024 WSI Coast Guard RNLI
- May Bank Holiday Weekend Press Release 2024 WSI Coast Guard RNLI
- Easter Bank Holiday Weekend Press Release 2024
- St-Brigids-Bank-Holiday-Weekend-2024
- National Stillwater Pool Lifesaving Championships 2024



Open Water Nationals 2024

## PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

- Irish Skipper Expo, February 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- National Services Day Parade, October 10<sup>th</sup> 2024
- National Ploughing Championships, Sept 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- WSI National Annual Award's Ceremony, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024



Amber Thursday in Cork city



National Services Day in Dublin city

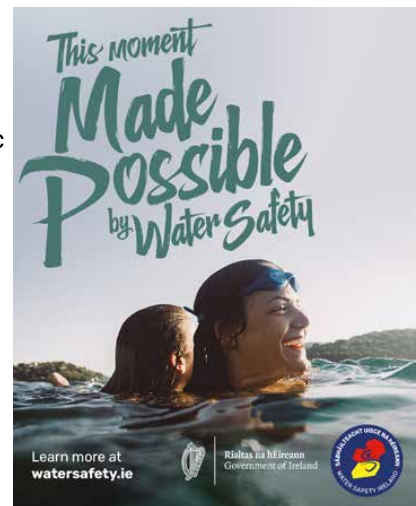


# National Water Safety Awareness Week

(June 17th – June 23rd)

National Water Safety Awareness Week took place from June 17th to 23rd, 2024, with Water Safety Ireland's Area Committees playing a vital role in supporting a nationwide marketing campaign. Disseminated through a wide range of media outlets, the campaign aimed to raise public awareness of water safety issues and encouraged people across the country to start meaningful conversations about water safety with their loved ones.

The week was marked by several free public information events designed to engage and educate. On June 17th, members of the National Ambulance Service joined us to deliver important safety messages, complemented by virtual reality experiences that allowed participants to immerse themselves in real-life water safety scenarios.



On June 18th, in partnership with the Galway Hooker Association, WSI hosted lifejacket safety workshops for local schoolchildren on the River Corrib. The following day, June 19th, the Spanish Arch in Galway came alive with interactive demonstrations, games, and quizzes tailored for young learners.

Led by Water Safety Ireland's Education Team, these engaging sessions taught students and bystanders how to effectively use a ringbuoy in an emergency, while reinforcing the importance of personal safety near water. The combination of hands-on learning and fun activities made a lasting impression on all who took part.



*This moment*  
**Made Possible**  
*by Water Safety*



# The SEIKO “Just In Time” Award



Nineteen lives were saved from drowning thanks to the courageous actions of rescuers who were honoured at Water Safety Ireland’s National Awards Ceremony on Thursday, 3rd October 2024. Their bravery and quick thinking in life-threatening situations serve as powerful reminders of the importance of water safety education.

We are sincerely grateful to Timemark for generously sponsoring Seiko watches in recognition of these heroic efforts. Full details of each rescue can be found in this report.

In addition, Long-Service Volunteer Awards were presented to 136 dedicated individuals, celebrating an extraordinary combined total of 2,535 years of service. These volunteers have played a vital role in teaching swimming, water rescue, and survival skills in communities across Ireland, and their commitment continues to make a lasting difference.



Carlos Amaya & Aaron O Callaghan pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)



Darragh Cullivan, Paul Cullivan & Meabh Murray pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)



Garda Peter McGee pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitt



GDA Coleman Curran pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitt



John Sweeney pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)



Michael & Amy Walsh pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)

**"It is an honour to pay tribute to the courageous and deserving award recipients being recognised at Water Safety Ireland's National Awards Ceremony. I want to commend the valiant efforts of these individuals who save others from drowning"**

Minister of State Anne Rabbitte speaking at Water Safety Ireland National Award Ceremony in 2024.

Source: Rachel Cahill, Eniscorthy Guardian & Irish Independent



**"We kept working on her 15 minutes until she came around. A doctor who was holidaying on the island came but by that stage she was conscious."**

Paul Cullivan recounts the moment he and his son Darragh intervened to perform CPR on a drowning victim in Inis Oírr

Source: Water Safety Ireland

**"I went back down under, and when I got down to the bottom I saw something and I grabbed, and I came up to the top and the ESB men were standing there and they took you and they gave you artificial respiration, which brought you round"**

Paul Jackson describing the moment in 1955 when, aged 14 he successfully rescued 3-year-old Richard Clarke from the Royal Canal.

Source: Water Safety Ireland

**"If Paul hadn't come along in the opportune time he did, I certainly wouldn't be standing here today"**

Richard Clarke speaking about the life-changing moment Paul rescued him from drowning in his youth.

Source: Water Safety Ireland

**"I threw the life ring all the way into the back of the cave, to where I thought I could see her, thankfully, she got lucky and she held onto it"**

Michael Walsh, describing the moment he and his mother Amy, rescued a person from a blowhole.

Source: Water Safety Ireland

**I was so proud of him; he just jumped in and got him out safely. Thankfully we were in the right place at the right time"**

Maura Sweeney describing the moment her son John rescued someone from drowning while on holiday.

Source: Water Safety Ireland

**"I didn't get a fright when I saw the people in the water. I just ran as quickly as I could with the surfboard into the water. But I remained very calm,"**

Carlos Amaya describing the moment he went to the aid of a family in distress.

Source: Sarah Slater, Irish Times



# Certification

There are two broad categories of certification – Swimming and Lifesaving. Certification reflects the efforts of our voluntary members who change skills, attitudes and behaviours by instilling water-confidence and deep-water swimming and survival ability. Water Safety Area Committees processed 17,465 Lifesaving certificates, and 23,125 Seal, Marlin and Orca Swimming and Lifesaving certificates in 2024. In addition, Water Safety Ireland processed 381 Water Safety at Work Certificates to enable employees to have an awareness of the dangers and knowledge of working safely in a water based environment.

Award Name	2024
Assistant Swimming Teacher	630
Beach Lifeguard	186
Beach Lifeguard Revalidation	193
BLS 1	1753
BLS 2	1085
BLS 3	491
Challenge 1	88
Challenge 2	168
Disabilities Aquatics Level 1	3
Disabilities Aquatics Level 2	48
Disabilities Aquatics Level 3	4
Endurance 1	329
Endurance 2	302
Instructor	87
IOW Lifeguard	21
IOW Lifeguard Revalidation	14
Lifesaving Sport Coach Assistant	14
National PLG Level 1	258
National PLG Level 1Revalidation	133
National PLG Level 2	1009
National PLG Level 2Revalidation	728
Pool Lifeguard	11
Pool Lifeguard Course Tutor	26
Pool Lifeguard Revalidation	10
Rescue 1	935
Rescue 2	742
Rescue 3	490

Award Name	2024
Rescue 4	143
Safety 1	1195
Safety 2	1709
Safety 3	1759
Safety 4	1662
Surf 2	130
Surf Instructor Beach Safety	28
Surf Instructor Beach Safety Rev	39
Surf Rescue Boat Crew	3
Surf Rescue Boat Driver	4
Survival 1	201
Survival 2	576
Swim Teacher Lifesaving	15
Swimming Teacher	207
Swimming Teacher Tutor	9
WSI Code of Ethics	27



Co. Clare teach lifesaving skill during World Drowning Prevention Day



National Pool Lifesaving Championships 2024



## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

In addition, a further 48,744 Primary School Aquatics Water Safety (PAWS) were issued. Primary Aquatics Water Safety (PAWS) is Water Safety Ireland's program of certification for primary school children and a component of the physical education strand of the primary school curriculum.

A total of **48,744** PAWS Certificates were issued in 2024.

### Land PAWS

Course	PAWS 1	PAWS 2	PAWS 3	PAWS 4	Land PAWS Total
Certificates	10174	9996	8823	6487	<b>35,480</b>

### PAWS in the Water

Course	PAWS 1	PAWS 2	PAWS 3	PAWS 4	PAWS 5
Certificates	1116	1650	2383	3062	2617

Course	PAWS 6	PAWS 7	PAWS 8	PAWS 9	PAWS 10
Certificates	1189	677	367	155	48

Total PAWS in the Water
<b>13,264</b>





WATER INSIGHT, SAFETY &amp; EDUCATION

## Get WISE: Junior Cycle

Get WISE is Ireland's first land-based water safety programme specifically designed for Physical Education teachers in Junior Cycle P.E. Using fundamental movements students are given the opportunity to explore non-contact rescue techniques, self-rescue skills and engage with simulated rescue scenarios.

The programme was developed in collaboration with OIDE, a support service for teachers and school leaders, alongside the Department of Education.

Get WISE aligns with the Junior Cycle P.E Curriculum Strand 2: Participation, Learning Outcome 2.9: Demonstrate an understanding of personal survival and water safety considerations.

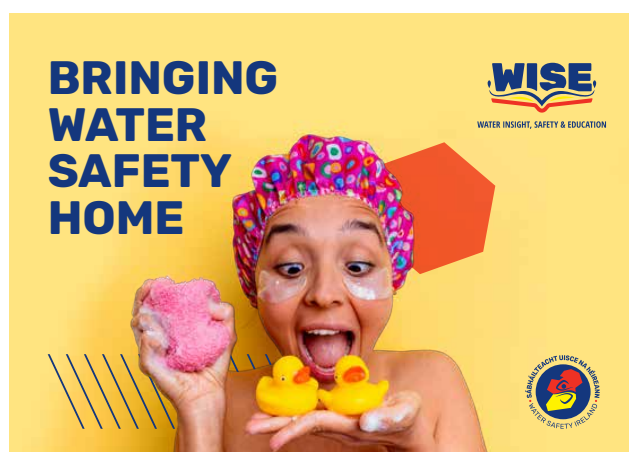
The Get WISE programme aims to equip students with the knowledge they need to make the right decisions in all sorts of situations to keep themselves, and others, safe on, or near, water.

## Teach WISE: Post-primary

WISE (Water, Insight, Safety & Education) is Water Safety Ireland's dedicated programme for post-primary students. Building on the foundation established through the PAWS (Primary Aquatic Water Safety) programme, WISE empowers young people with the essential knowledge and decision-making skills they need to stay safe in, on, and near water. Designed to prepare students for real-life scenarios, the programme encourages personal responsibility and promotes lifesaving awareness that can protect both themselves and others.

WISE involves a series of eight lessons that provide a solid introduction to Water Safety, with a focus on risk assessment and water safety strategies for all aspects of our daily lives, from specific water-based activities to hazards and the potential of unforeseen accidents.

The lessons look at different environments and highlight potential dangers so students can better assess the risks and their ability to determine the safest course of action in all types of situations for themselves and others. Overall, seventeen Get Wise certificates were issued in 2024.



# External visits and training

## 2024

Organisation	Content/Programme	No.	Date	Trainer
West Limerick Resources	General Water Safety	55	22/04/2025	Anna
Keep Safe Event	General Water Safety	100	3/4/2025	Anna/ Keira
Mayo Little VIP	Hold Hands course for Early Learning Centres (HH)	25	21/02/25	Rosie
RNLI Yaughal secondary event	General Water Safety	300	4/3/2025	Rosie
Balinora cork Scouts	Primary Aquatics Water Safety for primary schools (PAWS)	25	5/3/2025	Rosie
Hibernia College PME talk Online	Primary Aquatics Water Safety for primary schools (PAWS) intro	200	22/03/2025	Rosie
Online PAWS Provider	Primary Aquatics Water Safety for primary schools (PAWS) provider course	70	14/04/25	Rosie
Little Stars Waterford	Hold Hands course for Early Learning Centres (HH)	30	8/5/2025	Rosie
Dornan group	General Water Safety	30	19/05/2025	Rosie
NWSAW English Webinar	Primary Aquatics Water Safety for primary schools (PAWS)	2188 (50,000 students)	20/05/2025	Rosie/ Ciara
Galway Museum	Pre teen workshop General Water Safety	22	23/05/2025	Rosie/ Ciara
Scoil Eidne, Salthill	WISE Workshop	160	4/4/2025	Ciara
Oide	Get WISE CPD	9	30/04/2025	Ciara
Cloughleigh N.S (Whitestrand, Miltown Malbay)	Primary Aquatics Water Safety for primary schools (PAWS)	45	8/5/2025	Ciara
Hold Hands workshop (Ennis Library)	Hold Hands Day	25	22/05/2024	Ciara/ Rosie
Burrane N.S	Primary Aquatics Water Safety for primary schools (PAWS)/TY Student Work Experience	22	8/4/2025	Ciara
Midleton School Event	General Water Safety	231	4/6/2025	Ciara/ David



# Summer Water Safety Weeks

Water Safety Ireland's Area Committees across the country deliver an extensive programme of swimming and water safety weeks each summer, held at pools, rivers, lakes, and beaches nationwide. In many locations with access to pools and leisure centres, these vital classes continue beyond the summer months.

These Swim Weeks provide structured instruction in swimming, while also developing essential skills in water safety, rescue techniques, water survival, and basic life support. The programme not only builds confidence in the water but also equips participants with the knowledge and abilities to respond safely in emergency situations.

County	Location	Month	Course
Carlow	Bagnelstown	July	Swim
Carlow	Bagnelstown	August	Safety, Rescue
Carlow	Graigucullen	June	Safety
Cavan	Greaghlonge Lake, Shercock	July	Safety
Cavan	Lough McNeen, Blacklion	July	Safety
Cavan	Annagh Lake, Butlersbridge	July	Safety
Cavan	Annagh Lake, Miltown	July	Safety
Cavan	Killykeen, Killeshandra	July	Safety
Cavan	Crover, Lough Sheelin	July	Safety
Cavan	Growneys Wood, Lough Ramor	July	Safety
Cavan	Lavey Lake, Lavey	July	Safety
Cavan	Haltons River, Cootehill	July	Safety
Cavan	Fitzpatricks Shore, Lough Gowna	July	Safety
Cavan	Brackley Lake, Bawnboy	July	Safety
Cavan	Garty Lough, Arva	July	Safety
Cavan	Riversdale Pool, Ballinamore	August	Safety
Clare	Carrigaholt	July	Swim
Clare	Ballyvaughan Pier	Aug	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Whitestrans Miltown	June/July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Mountshannon	July/August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Flagmount	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Doonbeg	July	Swim, Safety
Clare	Kilkee	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Labasheeda	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue

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County	Location	Month	Course
Cork	Schull	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Ardfield	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Carrignavar Pool	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Bantry	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Sherkin	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Cuil Aodha	July/August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Tragumna	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Adrigole	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Garrylucas	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Glengarriff	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Oysterhaven	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Bere Island	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Cape Clear	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Ballymacoda	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Courtmacsherry	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Youghal	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Garryvoe	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Fountainstown	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Fermoy	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Inch	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Tragumna	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Castletownbere	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Union Hall	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Kilcrohane	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Rosscarbery	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Garnish Pier	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Glandore	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Urhan	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Ballycotton	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Ballymacoda	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue



Amy-Rose McDaid, Emma McGee and Shauna McFadden at Portnablagh pier in Co. Donegal



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County	Location	Month	Course
Donegal	Creevy Pier	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Aranmore Pier	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Greencastle Pier	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	The Rpses Pool	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Malin Head	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Rathmullen Pier	June	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Port Na Blaith	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Kilcar Pier	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Bundoran	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Tory Pier	July	Swim Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Mountcharles	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Nairn Portnoo Pier	July/August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Fintra Pier	July/August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	Portsalon	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Donegal	The Rosses Cruit Bridge	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Dublin	Skerries Beach	August	Swim, Safety
Galway	Cornamona	July	Swim,Safety, Rescue
Galway	Cill Chiaráin	July	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Inis Mór	August	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Portumna	July	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Carraroe	August	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Inis Oirr	July	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Tír An Fhia	August	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Inis Meáin	August	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Loughrea	August	Swim, Rescue
Galway	Trá Barr An Doire Carraroe	May	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Trá Ard Mhór Ciii Chiaráin	May	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Trá Tír An Fhia	June	Swim, Safety, Rescue



Bagenalstown Swimming Club during their annual Water Safety - Carlow Gala



## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

County	Location	Month	Course
Kildare	Blessington lakes		Swim
Kildare			
Kerry	Baile na nGall	July	Swim
Kerry	Brandon	July	Swim
Kerry	Cuas cróm	July	Safety
Kerry	Kells	July	Swim
Kerry	Ceann Trá	July	Swim
Kerry	Templenoe	July	Swim
Kerry	Derrynane	July	Swim
Kerry	Fenit	August	Swim
Kerry	Meenogahane	July	Swim
Kerry	Ballybunion	July /August	Swim,Safety
Kerry	Ballinskelligs	July	Safety
Kerry	Castlecove	July	Safety
Kerry	Portmagee	July	Swim
Kerry	Castlegregory	August	Swim
Kerry	Minard	June	Swim
Kerry	Cromane	July	Swim
Kerry	Rossbeigh	July	Swim
Kilkenny	Graiguenamanagh	July	Swim, Safety
Laois	Ballinakill	July	Swim, Safety
Leitrim	Keeldra	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Corry Strand J	June & July	Swim
Leitrim	Gulladoo	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Drumshambo	June, July & August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Cleighran Mor, Ballinaglera	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Rossinver	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Limerick	Glin Pier	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Limerick	Glin Pier	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Longford	Annagh	July	Swim, Safety
Louth	Gyles Quay	July	Swim,Safety, Rescue





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County	Location	Month	Course
Mayo	Ballina	July	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Ballina	August	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Ballinachalla Pier	July	Safety, Endurance
Mayo	Claremorris	July / August	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Castlebar	July	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Lacken	July	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Clare Island	August	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Charlestown	July	Safety, Endurance, Rescue
Mayo	Inishturk Island	July	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Kilmovee	July / August	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Belmullet	July	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Mayo	Belmullet	August	Swim, Safety, Endurance, Survival, Rescue
Offaly	Birr	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Offaly	Banagher	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Sligo	Aughris Pier	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Sligo	Enniscrone	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Tipperary North	Ballina Outdoor Pool	August	Safety
Tipperary North	Nenagh Leisure Centre	August	Safety
Waterford	Boatstrand	July/August	Safety, Rescue
Waterford	Dunmore East	July	Safety Rescue
Waterford	Newtown Cove	July	Safety, Rescue
Waterford	Ardmore	July/August	Safety, Rescue
Westmeath	Athlone	April	Safety, Rescue
Westmeath	Athlone	June	Safety, Rescue
Westmeath	Athlone	July	Safety, Rescue
Wexford	Rosslare	July	Swim, Safety
Wexford	Buncloody	August	Safety, Rescue
Wexford	Cahore Pier	July	Safety, Rescue
Wexford	Kilmore	July	Swim. Safety
Wexford	Fethard	July	Safety, Rescue
Wexford	Curraclloe	July	Safety, Rescue
Wicklow	Greystones Harbour	July	Safety
Wicklow	Wicklow Harbour	July	Swim

# World Drowning Prevention Day

In 2023, the World Health Assembly adopted its first-ever resolution on “Accelerating Action on Global Drowning Prevention”, under Agenda Item 16.3: Social Determinants of Health. This landmark decision followed the historic 2021 resolution by the United Nations General Assembly, which formally recognised July 25th as World Drowning Prevention Day.



Health Services Staffs Credit Union (HSSCU) sponsoring VR headsets for our education team ahead of World Drowning Prevention Day on July 25th.

Water Safety Ireland was honoured to support this global movement, contributing to two key events: a WHO Information Webinar for World Drowning Prevention Day and a high-level gathering in support of the resolution. Across Ireland, lifeguards, children, and WSI members enthusiastically took part in the ‘Go Blue for World Drowning Prevention Day’ campaign, with many iconic heritage sites lighting up blue in solidarity to raise awareness and remember those lost to drowning.





### WSI Representation at National Level

- An Taisce Blue Flag Jury – Ronnie Horan 2024
- ACESA (Assoc Chief Executives of State Agencies) – Joanne Walsh
- Irish Marine Search and Rescue Committee – Roger Sweeney
- Commissioner's Irish Lights (Users Group) – Roger Sweeney
- Marine Safety Communications Working Group – Roger Sweeney
- Community Rescue Boats Ireland – Ronnie Horan
- Green Coast Award – Ronnie Horan
- Federation of Irish Sports – Clare McGrath
- WSI Internal Auditor – Alison Elstone and Paul Burke
- National Designated Liaison Person – Ashling Nesbitt

### WSI Representation at International Level 2024

- International Life Saving (ILS) board member – Martin O'Sullivan until June 2024, Clare McGrath June to December
- ILSE (Europe) Sports Commission – Simon McGarrigle until June then Daniel Wrafter
- ILSE (Europe) Management & Administration Commission – Joanne Walsh
- ILSE (Europe) Rescue Commission – Breda Collins
- ILSE Drowning Prevention Commission – Roger Sweeney
- International Federation of Swimming Teachers Association – Breda Collins until June, Deirdre Webster June to December
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) – Ciara Gleeson
- Disaster Operations Working Group – Ronnie Horan
- College of Referees Panel ILS Europe – Clare McGrath
- ILS World Competition Rules Committee – Clare McGrath
- International Maritime Rescue Federation – Roger Sweeney
- World Health Assembly – Joanne Walsh and Roger Sweeney
- World Drowning Prevention Conference – Roger Sweeney, Ciara Gleeson and Brendan McGrath
- WHO World Drowning Prevention Day Working Group – Roger Sweeney
- Talk for RLSSA on International Women's Day – Ciara Gleeson

### Conferences

- National Pool - UL sport Arena - 17/18th February
- Junior Nationals - Kilkee Clare - 17/18 August
- Nipper/Masters Nationals - Ardmore Waterford - 2 August
- Senior Nationals - Mullaghmore Co Sligo - 21st September
- Examiners conference - Ballinasloe - 12th October
- Awards Ceremony - Hibernian Centre, Dublin castle, 3rd October
- Swimming Teacher Tutor Conference - September 14th, Athlone Springs Hotel

# Risk Assessments

Water Safety Ireland members conducted 52 risk assessments at bathing areas and waterways across the country in 2024, identifying issues that may present particular risks to public safety. These assessments play a vital role in making Ireland's waterways safer for everyone.

Recommendations often include the installation of public rescue equipment, safety signage, and other essential safety measures. In addition to these assessments, WSI carries out regular checks on the condition and usage of public rescue equipment, and provide expert advice to Local Authorities, state agencies, and private enterprises on a wide range of water safety matters.

Location	County
Céibh an Spidéil	Galway
Ballyloughane beach	Galway
Lisloughrey Pier, Galway	Mayo
East end, Inishboffin	Galway
Quilty, Co Clare	Clare
Dumhach, Inishboffin	Galway
Renvyle Beach	Galway
Aillebrack, Ballyconneely	Galway
Duncannon beach	Wexford
Carlingford, Louth	Louth
Kilcummin Back Strand	Mayo
Curragh Bay Beach, Waterford	Waterford
Ballyquin Beach	Waterford
Salterstown Pier Louth	Louth
Mullaghroe beach, Mayo	Mayo
Kilmurvey Beach, Galway	Galway
Ballinwilling beach, Garryvoe, Cork	Cork
Tragumna Beach Cork	Cork
Galleycove beach, Cork	Cork
Whiting Bay Waterford	Waterford
Owenahincha beach Cork	Cork
Ballybranagan beach, Cork	Cork
Red Strand, Cork	Cork
Inch, Cork	Cork
Mullaghmore beach, Sligo	Sligo
Shanagarry, Cork	Cork
Greenlands, Ring, East Cork	Cork
Youghal, Claycastle, Cork	Cork

Location	County
Red barn beach, East Cork	Cork
Frontstrand, Cork	Cork
Keem beach	Mayo
Keel Beach, Mayo	Mayo
De Burgh Estate, Naas	Kildare
Bagnetstown, Carlow	Carlow
Clashganny, Carlow	Carlow
Quinns road, DLR	Dublin
Portsalon, Donegal	Donegal
Ross Beach	Mayo
Rocky Bay, Nohaval, Cork	Cork
Sherkin Island	Cork
Barleycove, Mizenhead	Cork
Rosses point, Sligo	Sligo
Ballbriggan Harbour	Dublin
The Warren, Rosscarbery, Cork	Cork
Ballyhealy GC	Wexford
Booley Bay GC	Wexford
Blackrock beach	Dublin
Ballyheigue beach	Kerry
Banna beach, Kerry	Kerry
Oysterhaven Beach, Cork	Cork
Garnish Beach, Cork	Cork
Doneen Pier/Sheeps head, Cork	Munster
Midleton to Mogeely Cork	Cork
Greenhole Beach, Youghal	Cork
Ballyteige Beach	Wexford



# Lifeguard Rescues and Preventive Actions

Throughout the bathing season, Local Authorities employ lifeguards who have been assessed and certified by Water Safety Ireland to safeguard popular bathing sites nationwide. The table below highlights the significant impact and life-saving value of their work. We commend these dedicated individuals for their vital role in drowning prevention and for their continued commitment to public safety.

	Non-Fatal Drowning	Rescues without craft	Rescue Craft Rescues	First Aid	Lost Child Found	Advice Given	Accidents Prevented	Other incidents
Carlow	0	0	2	3	0	1,956	5	0
Cork	0	9	10	229	0	13,623	5,075	0
Clare	0	17	0	668	10	19,565	7,438	95
Donegal	0	1	7	74	1	20,251	5,857	1,045
Dublin	0	6	0	1,199	6	7,519	1,973	0
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	17	25	0	1,377	6	10,932	2,627	0
Fingal	0	22	18	196	11	3,189	699	102
Galway	0	11	0	259	1	6,750	605	35
Kerry	0	14	42	824	56	12,982	2,416	5,783
Kilkenny	2	5	0	9	0	1,320	171	22
Limerick Co.	0	0	0	25	0	145	60	1
Louth	0	0	0	82	0	74	0	0
Mayo	1	7	0	97	2	7,902	173	36
Meath	0	3	0	5	0	5	1	4
Roscommon*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sligo	2	0	3	82	59	15,345	8,563	6,903
Tipperary*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Waterford**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wexford**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wicklow**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Counties</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>5,129</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>121,558</b>	<b>35,663</b>	<b>14,026</b>

\* No Statistics as Lifeguards didn't work or Pools not open

\* No Breakdown of Monthly Statistics provided



# Lifesaving Sport

## Overall Combined Still & Open Water Competitions 2024

National Nipper Champions	Waterford
National Junior Champions	Wicklow
National Senior Champions (Presidents Trophy)	Clare Ladies A
National Masters Champions	Waterford



National Stillwater Championships 2024, UL Arena



# Pool Competitions 2024

National Junior, Senior and Masters Stillwater Competition – February 17th and 18th 2024 UL Arena  
Total Competitors 347 (190 Youth, 78 Senior, 79 Masters)

## Results:

### Youth Boys:

**1st:** Kilkenny  
**2nd:** Waterford  
**3rd:** Clare

### Youth Girls:

**1st:** Wicklow  
**2nd:** Clare  
**3rd:** Kilkenny

### Senior Men:

**1st:** Clare A  
**2nd:** Cork A  
**3rd:** Wicklow A

### Senior Ladies:

**1st:** Clare A  
**2nd:** Wicklow A  
**3rd:** Waterford A

### Masters (male/female combined):

**1st:** Waterford  
**2nd:** Cork  
**3rd:** Sligo

### Junior Simulated Emergency Response Competition (SERC)

**1st:** Waterford  
**2nd:** Wicklow  
**3rd:** Kilkenny

### Senior Simulated Emergency Response Competition (SERC)

**1st:** Kilkenny  
**2nd:** Cork  
**3rd:** Clare

## New Records:

### Oisín O'Grady:

Irish junior record in the 200m Super Lifesaver  
Irish junior record for 100m Manikin Carry with Fins  
Irish junior record for 100m Tow with Fins

### Aisling Barry:

Irish Senior Record 100m Manikin Carry with Fins

## Nipper Stillwater Competitions

### Regionals

**Munster – UL Arena 24th March 2024 210 Competitors**  
**Leinster – Kilkenny 23rd March 119 Competitors**  
**Ulster/Connacht – Sligo 16th March – 145 Competitors**  
**Nationals – UL Arena 6th April 2024 – 153 Competitors**

### Results

**1st:** Clare  
**2nd:** Waterford  
**3rd:** Galway





# Openwater Competitions

## Nippers Openwater

### Regionals

Munster – Co Cork 10th August 296 Competitors

Leinster – Co Wicklow 10th August 102

Competitors

Ulster/Connacht – Co Sligo 10th August 161

Competitors

## National Nipper Openwater

Ardmore 24th August 2024 – 173 competitors

### Results

1st: Waterford

2nd: Clare

3rd: Wicklow

## Youth Openwater

### Regionals

Munster – Co Cork 10th August 98 Competitors

Leinster – Co Wicklow 10th August 60 Competitors

Ulster/Connacht – Co Sligo 10th August 45

Competitors

## National Youth Openwater

Kilkee County Clare – 17th and 18th August – 160 Competitors

### Results

#### Youth Boys

1st: Clare

2nd: Waterford

3rd: Wicklow

#### Youth Girls

1st: Cork

2nd: Wicklow

3rd: Clare

## National Masters Open Water Championships

Ardmore Co Waterford 24th August 2024 – Number of Competitors: 44

### Results

1st: Waterford Masters

2nd: Sligo Masters

3rd: Clare Masters

## National Senior Open Water Championships

Mullaghmore Co Sligo 21st September – Number of Competitors: 123

### Results:

#### Senior Men

1st: Cork A

2nd: Clare A

3rd: Cork B

#### Senior Ladies

1st: Clare A

2nd: Cork A

3rd: Wicklow A

All individual event results available [here](#).



# World Lifesaving Championships, Gold Coast Australia

Overall Team Result: Youth 6th Senior 10th  
Medals: 8 Bronze

## Medalists:

- Senior team members Ashling Barry, Tom Breen, Odhran Savage and Ryan Cotter won bronze in the SERC (Simulated Emergency Response Competition)
- Youth Men's team members Luca power, Charlie Brennan, Oisín O'Grady, Jamie Flynn won bronze in the Tube Rescue Competition

## New Irish Records:

- Senior Women's 100m medley - Aisling Barry with a time of 01.19.45
- Senior Women's 50m Manikin carry - Aisling Barry in a time of 38.48
- Senior men's 100m tow - Dylan O'Brien with a time of 00.54.13
- Under 19 men 100m tow - Oisín O'Grady with a time of 00.54.60
- Senior 4x50m mixed relay - Lily Sheehy, Aisling Barry, Dylan O'Brien, Odhran Savage with a time of 01.59.79

- Under 19 men 4x50m medley - Oisín Grady, Charlie Brennan, Ferdia Hayes, Jamie Flynn with a time of 01.36.69

A number of Masters also attended the World Championships in Australia.

Members from Clare, Donegal and Cork also attended the Orange Cup in Rotterdam with Leana Liddane, Aisling Barry and Oisín O'Grady making National records an Oisín winning a Gold medal in the 100m carry with fins.

## Referees

National C Stillwater Referee course: 16 Candidates

National C Openwater Referee Course: 19

Candidates

International B Openwater Referee Course: 7

Candidates

international referee appointments, including:

- World Lifesaving Championships Chief Referee  
SERC: Clare McGrath.

## Coaches

- 2 Assistant Coach Course: 20 Candidates





# National Awards Ceremony

Nineteen lives were saved from drowning by heroic individuals who were honoured at Water Safety Ireland's National Annual Awards Ceremony, held at the Printworks Event and Exhibition Centre, Dublin Castle, on Thursday, 3rd October 2024.

The ceremony was attended by Minister of State at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Anne Rabbitte TD, who paid tribute to the award recipients. Honours presented included the SEIKO Just in Time Awards, Long Service Awards, Recognition Awards for outstanding service to Water Safety Ireland, and the prestigious Volunteer of the Year Award.

Among the recipients were members of the public, Water Safety Ireland volunteers, and representatives from organisations who, through their support and quick actions, have helped reduce the risk of drowning and furthered WSI's mission throughout the year.

A special highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of Long-Service Volunteer Awards to 136 dedicated individuals, collectively recognised for an extraordinary 2,535 years of service. These volunteers have played a crucial role in teaching swimming, water rescue, and survival skills within communities across Ireland.



Gardai, Stephen Murray, Joshua Lancaster, Sonia Buggy, Lorcan Cowen and Senan Farrell pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte



Garda Michelle Conway, Garda Daniel O Callagh pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte



Rohan Debeny Bazeley & Yanto Carrothers pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)



Paul Jackson & Richard Clarke pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)



# Community and Social Responsibility Awards

In recognition of the support given to Water Safety Ireland's community work, charitable activities and commitment to drowning prevention initiatives and the reduction of aquatic related injuries.

## Timemark

Timemark Limited is a distributor of leading watch and jewellery brands. Founded in 1979, and entirely Irish owned and managed, Timemark sponsors the SEIKO Just In Time Award, which they have supported since its inception in 2001 and for which we are deeply grateful.

## Conrad Wynne, OxygenCare

On World Drowning Prevention Day, Conrad Wynne, Senior Product Specialist with OxygenCare presented a DefibTech LIFELINE AED to Water Safety Ireland, in recognition of WSI's work over decades in providing and promoting lifesaving skills including CPR and the use and deployment of AEDs which has contributed greatly to the number of lives saved in Ireland. OxygenCare, an Irish owned family business, now in its third generation of Moran Family management, have recently taken over as the new official importer for DefibTech in Ireland and are contributing to saving by lives by improving access to Defibrillators from their Wicklow base and through selected distributors across the country. Thank you OxygenCare for marking World Drowning Prevention Day with an AED that will bring peace of mind to hundreds of lifesavers and their parents during Lifesaving competitions nationwide.



Thomas Shaw Hamilton pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)

# Leon Quinlan Perpetual Award

**Awarded to: Mother of Divine Grace Primary School, Ballygall, Dublin**

The Leon Quinlan Perpetual Award is presented to a primary school that has been particularly attentive to the need for pupils to learn water safety skills. When young Leon Quinlan drowned in 2004, his mother Lynn contacted Water Safety Ireland about running an event to raise awareness about water safety. Mother of Divine Grace Primary School, located in Ballygall, Dublin has shown such great commitment and enthusiasm in delivering Water Safety Ireland's Primary Aquatics Water Safety Programme to their pupils. The children learn about local hazards in the home, on the farm and other aquatic environments nearby. Congratulations to the school for ensuring that the children in their care have the knowledge and skills necessary to stay safe from drowning.



# Avery Greene Memorial Award

**Awarded to: Spraoi Playgroup, Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare**

Avery Greene was just three years old when, in 2019, he tragically drowned while on holiday in Spain. Avery's mother Amanda became an enthusiastic promoter of an education resource called Hold Hands that was developed by Water Safety Ireland and distributed to more than 4,000 Early Learning Centres nationwide. The programme teaches young children how to stay safe in a variety of aquatic environments. This year we would like to congratulate Spraoi Playgroup, Miltown Malbay Co.Clare for their keen interest and enthusiasm in teaching the Hold Hands programme, well done!



# Sports Volunteer of the Year

## Alison Deane, Co. Clare

Alison Deane's involvement in Lifesaving Sport began over a decade ago, initially as a supportive parent when her children excelled as competitors. Her passion for the sport quickly grew, and she became an expert "meet manager," playing a key role in regional and national competitions by managing entries, recording, and publishing results. Alison's dedication deepened when her daughter joined the National Squad, leading

her to take on the role of National Squad Administrator, where she continues to excel, even after her daughters have stopped competing. Known for her professionalism and efficiency, Alison expertly manages all squad communications, staying closely connected with athletes and assisting with squad camps. In 2018, she was instrumental in the success of the European Junior Championships, hosted in Limerick and Kilkee, leveraging her hospitality and competition management skills to ensure the event's smooth execution. In 2022, Alison joined the Sport Commission while continuing her demanding role as squad administrator. Her commitment to the sport is unwavering, spending countless hours at the beach and pool, ensuring every detail of competitions, from entries to results, is handled seamlessly. Alison's tireless contributions make her a deserving recipient of the Water Safety Ireland Sports Volunteer of the Year award.



Alison Deane, Pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)

# Sports Persons of the Year Award

## Oisín O'Grady, Co. Clare

Oisín O'Grady, a standout athlete from Co. Clare, has made an extraordinary impact on the world of lifesaving this year. His exceptional talent earned him a place on the Junior National Team for the World Lifesaving Championships in Australia. Nationally Oisín has also competed fiercely in both the Junior and Senior categories. As a key member of Ireland's Junior team, Oisín played an integral role in their outstanding performance, securing a 7th



Oisín O'Grady Pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)



place finish among 30+ nations. He also returned home with a coveted bronze medal from the Tube Rescue event. Oisín's individual accomplishments are equally impressive, setting five national records and reaching both A and B Finals at the World Championships. Oisín's success and continuous setting of National records each year, reflects his relentless dedication to the sport, built through years of intense training and commitment. His teamwork and dedication to the National Training Squad and National Team programs have further cemented his place as one of Ireland's top lifesaving athletes. His achievements this year make him a truly deserving recipient of the Sports Person of the Year award.

### Aisling Barry, Co. Cork

Aisling Barry, a standout athlete from Co. Cork, has solidified her place as one of Ireland's top lifesaving competitors. Earning a spot on the Senior National Team, she travelled to Australia in August for the World Lifesaving Championships, where her leadership qualities shone brightly. For the second consecutive year, Aisling was named Female Captain of the team, a testament to the high regard in which she is held by the coaching staff. Competing against world-class athletes,

Aisling showcased her determination and skill, delivering exceptional performances. As a key member of the SERC (Simulated Emergency Response Competition) team, she helped secure a bronze medal, contributing significantly to Ireland's overall success. Her achievements extend beyond the international arena, as Aisling continues to excel in national competitions also with a number national records to her name, demonstrating the results of her unwavering dedication and rigorous training. Aisling's accomplishments are a testament to her remarkable talent and commitment to lifesaving, making her a well-deserved recipient of the Sports Person of the Year award.



*Aisling Barry Pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L) and WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R)*

# Long Service Awards

The Long Service Awards honour the outstanding voluntary commitment of individuals who have dedicated themselves to promoting public awareness of water safety and rescue—guided by the humanitarian goal of saving lives.

Water Safety Ireland extends its heartfelt gratitude to the following volunteers for their unwavering dedication and remarkable service.

First Name	Last Name	County	Years of Service
Anthony	O'Connor	Mayo	10
Aoife	Byrne	Kildare	10
Aoife	Mooney	Bonmahon CRBI	10
Bernie	Gavin	Mayo	10
Billy	Crowley	Bonmahon CRBI	10
Brian	Fitzgerald	Waterford Marine S&R	10
Caitriona	Moroney	Longford	10
Christopher	Nicholson	Sligo	10
Ciaran	Riordan	Dublin	10
Colette	Sweeney	Mayo	10
Conor	Stephensons	Wexford	10
Denise	Toland	Mayo	10
Garry	Kavanagh	Ballybunion CRBI	10
Gerry	Keohane	Mallow Search & Rescue	10
Graham	Sheehan	Mallow Search & Rescue	10
Isabelle	O Mahony	Ballybunion CRBI	10
Jamie	Blanche	Waterford Marine S&R	10
Jon	Cruwys	Mallow Search & Rescue	10
Lauren	Cawley	Sligo	10
Martin	Hoy	Mallow Search & Rescue	10
Martin	Morrissey	Bonmahon CRBI	10
Martin	O Mahony	Bonmahon CRBI	10
Maurice	Quinlan	Mallow Search & Rescue	10
Ólivia	Stundon	Limerick City	10
Orla	Finnegan	Cavan	10
Paul	McDonnell	Ballybunion CRBI	10
Rebecca	McGrory	Dublin	10
Seamus	O Reilly	Bonmahon CRBI	10
Sharon	Walsh	Waterford Marine S&R	10
Ursula	O Shea	Kerry	10

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First Name	Last Name	County	Years of Service
Veronica	Hunter	Sligo	10
Aine	O Sullivan	Cork	15
Charlotte	Byrne	Wexford	15
Darina	Halpenny	Dublin	15
Darryl	Barry	Waterford Marine S&R	15
David	O'Donaghue	Mallow Search & Rescue	15
Declan	Barry	Waterford Marine Search & Rescue	15
Donal	Gleeson	Mallow Search & Rescue	15
Edel	McCarthy	Dublin	15
Emmet	Lynch	Ballybunion CRBI	15
Emmet	Murphy	Mallow Search & Rescue	15
Gavin	Walsh	Mallow Seach & Rescue	15
Graham	Kerr	Cork	15
Keith	Scanlon	Dublin	15
Leanne	Bryan	Wexford	15
Marie	Nolan	Cork	15
Rebecca	Farr	Cork	15
Ronan	Looney	Mallow Search & Rescue	15
Sharon	Staunton	Mato	15
Valerie	Stundon	Limerick City	15
Barry	Robinson	Mayo	20
Brian	Mannion	Ballybunion CRBI	20
Chris	Reilly	Ballybunion CRBI	20
Chris	O Sullivan	Ballybunion CRBI	20
Denise	Collins	Kerry	20
Emer	Doyle	Wexford	20
Geraldine	McMahon	Kerry	20
Grave	Flahive	Ballybunion CRBI	20
Greg	Clifford	Mallow Search & Rescue	20
Jane	Campbell	Kerry	20
John	Williams	Cork	20
Lindsay	Stevens	Dublin	20
Maebh	Uí Ainféin	Kerry	20
Marian	Kelly	Kerry	20
Martin	O'Sullivan	Mallow Search & Rescue	20
Mary	Wrafter	Defence Forces	20
Niamh	Cullinane	Kerry	20



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First Name	Last Name	County	Years of Service
Noelle	O Leary	Cork	20
Omar	Fitzell	Ballybunion CRBI	20
Orla	Donnelly	Mayo	20
Orla	Roche O Connor	Mayo	20
Philip	Johnson	Mallow Search & Rescue	20
PJ	O Gorman	Ballybunion CRBI	20
Sionhán	Bradley	Cork	20
Stephen	Cullinane	Kerry	20
Tara	O Connor	Kerry	20
Aine	Stafford	Wexford	30
Anthony	Nolan	Carlow	30
Ben	Kennedy	Dublin	30
Dennis	Merrit	Mallow Search & Rescue	30
Diarmuid	Ó Donnabháin	Cork	30
Fergal	Wickham	Dublin	30
Fiona	Ni Dhuinní	Cork	30
Gearoid	O'Connor	Ballybunion CRBI	30
Hilary	Lynch	Cork	30
Ian	Smith	Wicklow	30
John	Goggin	Mallow Seach & Rescue	30
John	McGrory	Dublin	30
John	Paul Merrit	Mallow Search & Rescue	30
Mike	Ryan	Ballybunion CRBI	30
Noreen	O Connor	Mayo	30
Pauline	Jordan	Mayo	30
Ronan	Kelly	Dublin	30
Terry	Logan	Limerick Search & Rescue	30
Zena	Ryan	Ballybunion CRBI	30
Bernard	Glavin	Mallow Seearch & Rescue	40
Colette	Allen	Wexford	40
Elizabeth	Mc Caul	Cavan	40
Gary	Smyth	Mayo	40
John	Reilly	Cavan	40
John	Woulfe	Mallow Search & Rescue	40
Kieran	Horgan	Mallow Search & Rescue	40
Nikki	Dowdall	Wexford	40
Seamus	Maher	Carlow	40
Bronagh	Stafford	Wexford	50

# Volunteer of the Year Award

## Recipient: Marcus Choo, Co. Sligo

Marcus has been involved with Sligo WSAC for ten years. He has taken on many roles, most notably, the role of Sligo Committee Chair and Sports Development Officer for Sligo Surf Lifesaving Club. Marcus has proven to be a focused and diligent volunteer, he is a man dedicated to promoting water safety in the Sligo region. Marcus's emphasis has always been on what is best for the child, and we can only hope his strong sense of decency and work ethic has inspired and motivated his fellow volunteers. Marcus works full time and yet, sacrifices his free time, to commit to the work of Sligo Water Safety. Marcus as a master Surf Lifesaving competitor, understands the sport, and brings a knowledge of what is involved in competing through to the younger members. He has a talent for including fun and humour in the serious preparation for competitions, essential qualities to have when coaching and teaching children. Marcus always has a smile and a joke but is a modest man at heart.



Marcus Choo Pictured with Minister Anne Rabbitte (L), WSI Chair Clare McGrath (R) and WSI CEO Joanne Walsh (R)

# The SEIKO “Just In Time” Award and Rescue Appreciation Award

Generously sponsored by SEIKO, these awards recognise the bravery and quick-thinking of rescuers who intervened to assist individuals in immediate danger in the water. Congratulations to the 32 rescuers honoured for their heroic actions in saving 19 lives across 16 separate incidents.

These awards are presented to those who acted swiftly to assist individuals struggling in water and at risk of drowning. Their courageous interventions made all the difference—without their prompt actions, the outcomes could have been tragically different.

## 1. Garda Peter McGee (JIT), Co. Donegal

On Tuesday 30th November 2021, Garda McGee observed a female in distress in the water at Port Bridge, Letterkenny. Without hesitation, Garda McGee entered the water and swam towards the female. The water was quite deep, the tide was coming in and the current was strong. He managed to grab onto the woman and bring her over towards the riverbank. He held on valiantly to the wall of one of the arches of the bridge until a ringbuoy was thrown to him. He used the ringbuoy to bring the woman back to the edge and up onto the embankment to safety. She was taken to hospital where she made a full recovery. The swift and brave actions of Garda Peter McGee undoubtedly prevented the loss of life. Well done Peter.



## 2. Darragh Cullivan (JIT), Paul Cullivan (JIT), Meabh Murray (RA), Co. Dublin

On Monday 7th of August 2023, Darragh and Paul were alerted to a commotion down at the shore of Inis Oirr beach, county Galway. They observed a woman face down in the water. Without hesitation, both entered the water and swam out to the woman. Upon reaching her, they realised that she was unresponsive. They immediately began rescue breaths on her while in the water. They managed to bring her to the shore and commenced CPR. They also called out for an AED and an ambulance. They moved the woman up to dry sand and restarted CPR. After a period, they noticed a pulse. At that point they continued to support her breathing until a doctor arrived with equipment to help. They remained with her and continued to support and monitor. She slowly regained consciousness. Meabh Murray who was with both Darragh and Paul, organised for the beach to be cleared for the helicopter to land safely. Thanks to the swift and brave actions of Meabh Murray, Darragh and Paul Cullivan the woman recovered and tragedy was averted. Well done Darragh, Paul and Meabh.





### 3. Michael Walsh (JIT), Amy Walsh (RA), Co. Cork

On a Thursday evening in February 2021, a woman got into difficulty while swimming at Dunworley beach. She was pushed by the turbulent tide into a blowhole where she became trapped and as the tide closed in she could not see anything as visibility was very poor. Michael and his mother Amy were out walking, when Amy noticed clothing and a phone near the waterline of the beach. They observed the beach from the slipway and they could not see anyone in the water. As a precaution, they decided to make their way over to a rocky area to ensure that there was nobody in difficulty. Amy proceeded to yell into the blowhole, and they could hear a cry for help. Michael immediately obtained a ringbuoy that was located beside the blowhole. He climbed into the blowhole and threw the ringbuoy towards the woman. Thankfully, she managed to grab hold of the ringbuoy. Meanwhile, Amy went to her car and obtained a lifejacket. She passed this onto Michael who managed to successfully throw the lifejacket to the woman. Michael held onto the rope of the ringbuoy for over fifteen minutes until emergency services arrived. They took over and successfully brought the woman to safety. The woman made a full recovery. Well done Amy and Michael.



### 4. Paul Jackson (JIT), Co. Dublin

On the 23rd of September 1955, then 3-year-old Richard Clarke was playing with his 5-year-old cousin, when he fell into the water at Binn's bridge, Royal Canal. His cousin sought help from ESB employees who were laying cable nearby. They rushed to the boy's aid. One of them made an unsuccessful effort to help Richard out of the water. Paul Jackson, then 14 entered the water and successfully brought Richard onto the bank to safety. The ESB employees revived the boy, and he was taken to hospital where he made a full recovery. Well done Paul..



### 5. Carlos Amaya (JIT), Aaron O Callaghan (JIT), Co. Cork

On the 18th of March 2024, at Garretstown beach, Carlos had just reached his van after teaching a surf lesson when he heard shouting for help. He spotted a family in distress in the water. A woman was standing on rocks in the water, shouting at 3 members of her family, who were further out to sea and being pulled outwards by a rip current. Carlos immediately grabbed his surfboard and ran towards the water. Another surfer Aaron, who was already in the water was also making his way towards those in distress. By the time they reached the three people, they were approximately 200 metres from shore. Carlos focused on rescuing the two children with the aid of his surfboard and managed to bring them safely to the shore. Aaron assisted the father of the children who had become exhausted and brought him safely to shore. All three made a full recovery. The swift and brave actions of both Carlos and Aaron undoubtedly prevented the loss of life and for this we thank them for their efforts.



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### 6. Gardai, Stephen Murray (RA), Joshua Lancaster (RA), Sonia Buggy (JIT), Lorcan Cowen (RA) and Senan Farrell (RA), Co. Dublin

On Sunday evening, the 11th of August 2024, members of the Gardai Sonia Buggy, Joshua Lancaster, Stephen Murray, Senan Farrell and Lorcan Cowen attended the scene of an incident at Memorial Bridge, Dublin 1. When Gardaí arrived at the scene they observed a male in difficulty in the River Liffey off the Memorial bridge. He was being quickly carried downstream by a strong current. Gardaí Stephen Murray and Garda Joshua Lancaster grabbed a ringbuoy each. Garda Lorcan Cowen also grabbed a third ringbuoy. They attempted to intercept the male as he was being brought down the river by the current. Garda Sonia Buggy went down a ladder and entered the water. At this point the male had submerged under the water numerous times and was exhausted from trying to stay afloat. Thankfully the man grabbed hold of a ringbuoy and Garda Buggy entered the river with another ringbuoy. She successfully brought the male over to the ladder and held onto him. He lost consciousness, so Garda Buggy put the man on his back and opened his airway. After a time, he regained consciousness, and the Gardaí were able to encourage him to climb up the ladder with assistance. He was taken to hospital and made a full recovery. Well done to all involved as your swift and brave actions undoubtedly prevented the loss of life. Thank you.

### 7. Gardaí Coleman Curran (JIT), Garda Brendan Murphy (JIT), Co. Kildare

On Saturday the 3rd of August 2024, Gardaí in Athy, Kildare were notified of a woman in distress in the River Barrow. Gardaí Coleman Curran and Brendan Murphy ran to the scene, and Garda Curran entered the water and brought the woman to safety with the assistance of Garda Murphy. The woman re-entered the water and was carried downstream by the current. Garda Curran re-entered the water, caught up with her and held onto her while Garda Murphy threw a ringbuoy to Garda Curran. Garda Murphy successfully pulled both Garda Curran and the female to safety and she made a full recovery. Well done Coleman and Brendan for helping this woman in distress.



### 8. Gardai Hayden Drew (JIT) & Brian Burns (JIT), Co. Wexford

On the 11th of November 2023, Gardai Hayden Drew & Brian Burns received a call regarding a male in distress in the River at Ferrybank in Wexford. The speed of the current, the cold temperature of the water and the slippery condition of the slipway raised serious concerns for the Gardaí. Following a quick assessment of the situation, both Gardaí entered the water just above waist level, and managed to reach the man and take him to safety. He made a full recovery. Thanks Hayden and Brian for your brave selfless actions to help save this man from drowning. Well done.





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### 9. Garda Keith Conlon (JIT), Garda Deirdre Connolly (JIT), Garda Tara McGrory (RA), Co. Donegal

On the 17th of September 2023, Gardai Keith Conlon, Deirdre Connolly and Tara McGrory arrived at Lough Swilly in Buncrana, they were a group of people said that there was a man in difficulty somewhere in the water but it was dark and visibility was poor. Gardai Conlon and Connolly waded into the water for 400 meters, making their way in the general direction of the person in distress. They continued to call out while Garda McGrory shone her torch in their direction from shore. They eventually located the male who was on a sandbar. They reassured him and eventually managed to bring him safely to shore. He made a full recovery. Well done Keith, Deirdre and Tara for your teamwork that saved this man at risk of drowning in darkness.



### 10. Michael Breen (JIT), Co. Sligo

On the 27th of September 2023, Michael was out walking his dog at Enniscrone beach. He spotted a woman lying face down in the water. Michael ran down onto the beach and entered the water. He managed to grab hold of the woman and bring her safely to shore. Emergency services arrived at the scene and took over. She made a full recovery. Well done Michael for quickly taking action to save this woman's life.



### 11. Rohan Debeny Bazeley (RA), Yanto Carrothers (RA), Donegal

On the evening of the 18th of May 2024, at Portnablagh pier, both Rohan and Yanto heard yelling down at the pier. They observed Gardai arriving at the scene. They grabbed kayaks, entered the water and paddled quickly towards a woman in distress. Upon reaching the woman, they noticed she was afloat and holding onto something by the pier. Gardai had managed to grab a hold of the female and both students remained in the water with her until she was safely pulled onto the pier to safety by members of the Gardai. She made a full recovery. Well done Rohan and Yanto for helping to secure a positive outcome



### 12. Thomas Shaw Hamilton (JIT), Co. Waterford

On the 6th of June 2024, two young teenagers were swimming on Clonea Strand in Waterford. Thomas happened to be on the beach when he noticed the two boys suddenly getting into difficulty. He could see that they were caught in a rip current. He immediately entered the water. The rip current was very strong. It took him 10 minutes to swim out to them. Upon reaching the boys, he calmed them down by verbally reassuring them. Thomas was wearing a lifejacket at the time and was able to remove it and use it to keep all afloat. After about 15 minutes they managed to get back to the shoreline. Onlookers called emergency services, and both boys made a full recovery. Well done Thomas for taking swift action to save these two boys.





### 13. Michael Brennan (JIT), Wexford

On the 20th of August in 1982, at Fethard-On-Sea, Michael was alerted to a man and a boy in difficulty in the water. He immediately swam out towards them. The water was very deep, and they were far from the shoreline. Michael managed to reach both and began helping them to swim towards the shore while calling for help to people on the beach. Michael managed to bring the boy safely back to shore where he made a full recovery. Well done Michael for your brave actions that saved this young boy's life.



### 14. Garda Michelle Conway (JIT), Garda Daniel O Callaghan, (JIT), Co. Cork

On the 1st of January 2024, Gardai Conway and O'Callaghan observed a vehicle entering the sea at Gobby beach, Ringaskiddy. Visibility was poor and after assessing the scene and calling for assistance, both Gardai entered the water and waded out to the vehicle where the driver was having difficulty getting out. Both Gardai broke the window of the car and managed to pull the driver out of the vehicle and safely back to the shore. He made a full recovery. Well done Michelle and Daniel for helping to save this man's life.



### 15. Gardai JP Twomey, Alison O'Flynn, Richard Casey, Co. Cork

On the 1st of January 2024, Gardai Twomey, O'Flynn & Casey became alerted to a woman in distress in the water near Brian Boru bridge on the River Lee. Gardai Casey grabbed a ringbuoy and threw it in the direction of the person while Garda Twomey descended a ladder with a second ringbuoy and managed to pass it to the woman. Both Garda Casey and O'Flynn controlled the ringbuoy ropes while Garda Twomey reassured the person who was unable to exit the water. They remained with her until the fire brigade unit arrived at the scene and removed her from the water. She made a full recovery. Well done JP, Alison and Richard for working together to save this woman from drowning.



### 16. John Sweeney (JIT), Father David Sweeney, Co. Dublin

On the night of the 19th of June this year, while on holidays in Spain, a young boy with additional needs left the bedroom he was sharing with his father and managed to make his way to the swimming pool. He entered the water which was approximately 1.2 metres deep. A woman noticed the boy was in difficulty and called out to her son for help. Her son John quickly entered the pool and managed to reach the boy and pull him back to safety, where he was reunited with his relieved father. Well done John for taking action so quickly and turning a potential tragedy into a positive outcome.



# **Media Appreciation Awards**

Presented in appreciation for covering drowning prevention and water safety issues throughout the year.

## **National Radio Broadcaster: Claire Byrne, Today with Claire Byrne, RTÉ**

We are grateful to Claire Byrne RTÉ for highlighting water safety issues on her Show “Today with Claire Byrne” on RTÉ Radio 1. This included liaising with Water Safety Ireland directly to deliver important water safety messages to the public and children across Ireland to help change attitudes and behaviours around water. Well done Claire and the team at RTÉ radio One.

## **Local Radio Station Award: Teresa O'Malley, Mid-West Radio**

Mid-West Radio is broadcasting since 1989 with a focus on local news, current affairs, sports and music. Through promoting water safety awareness, they have been instrumental in protecting lives and educating the public on the importance of safe water practices. Thank you, Mid-West Radio.

## **National TV Broadcaster: RTÉ News, Laura Fletcher**

Every summer, hundreds of thousands of people are attracted to Ireland's waterways nationwide. Many of those taking to our wonderful aquatic environments have very little experience of the dangers of open water. We are grateful to Laura Fletcher at RTÉ Six-One News for helping us to raise awareness and to change attitudes and behaviours around water.

## **Provincial Press Award: Adam Walsh, Editor, The Longford Leader**

The Longford Leader, founded in 1897 is a weekly newspaper which contains a mix of the latest local and national news, sports, features and opinion pieces, as well as providing a successful online offering to its readers. It has promoted many of Water Safety Ireland's safety messages and warnings to the public. Thank you to the Longford Leader for raising awareness of water safety and drowning prevention

## **National Press Award: Larissa Nolan, The Irish Daily Mirror**

The Irish Daily Mirror is an Irish daily newspaper launched in 1997. Their printed and digital editions have covered many topical water safety issues throughout the year, including Water Safety Ireland's Drowning Report and bank holiday weekend water safety warnings and a full-page article by journalist Larissa Nolan about World Drowning Prevention Day and the need for a cultural change to attitudes about water safety In Ireland. We are truly grateful for this support which keeps water safety in the public consciousness all year round.

## **Online Broadcasting: Lorna Siggins, Journalist & Author**

Lorna Siggins is an award-winning print and radio reporter, former Irish Times western correspondent, and the author of books including “Search and Rescue: True Stories of Irish Air Sea Rescue and the Loss of R116”. She is currently a contributor to The Sunday Times, The Irish Independent, The Irish Examiner, Afloat, The Skipper and to RTE Radio 1 Seascapes, and Countrywide. Lorna has covered many water safety issues that have appeared in various publications including Afloat which is one of Ireland's leading digital news websites for those involved in water-based activities. Her efforts to raise public awareness has played a vital role in preventing accidents and we thank her for her continued support and dedication to keeping our communities safe around water.

# Analysis of Drownings 2024

Water Safety Ireland - targeting at-risk groups with drowning prevention initiatives.

Total provisional drownings in Ireland for 2023 is 78. The Central Statistics Office is expected to finalise this total in Quarter 4 2025. This is a significant reduction from 100 drownings in 2022. The 10-year average 2013 to 2022 is 124 per year. Most importantly the five-year average from 2013 to 2017 was 132 per year, compared with 2018 to 2022 averaging 116 per year. The proportion of drownings in each category has remained stable over time, the most notable reduction is reflected in the reduction of deaths by suicide from drowning. Water Safety Ireland believes all drownings are a preventable tragedy that requires a targeted approach to water safety and support for at risk individuals.

## Contributory factors to drowning:

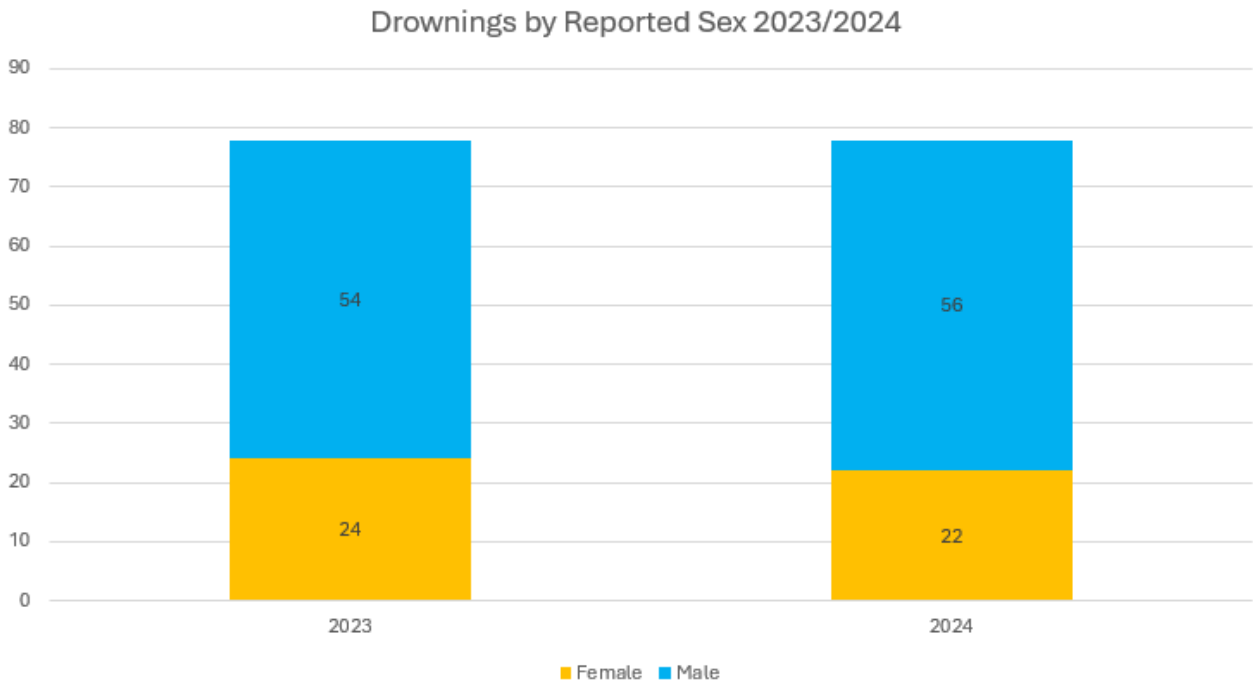
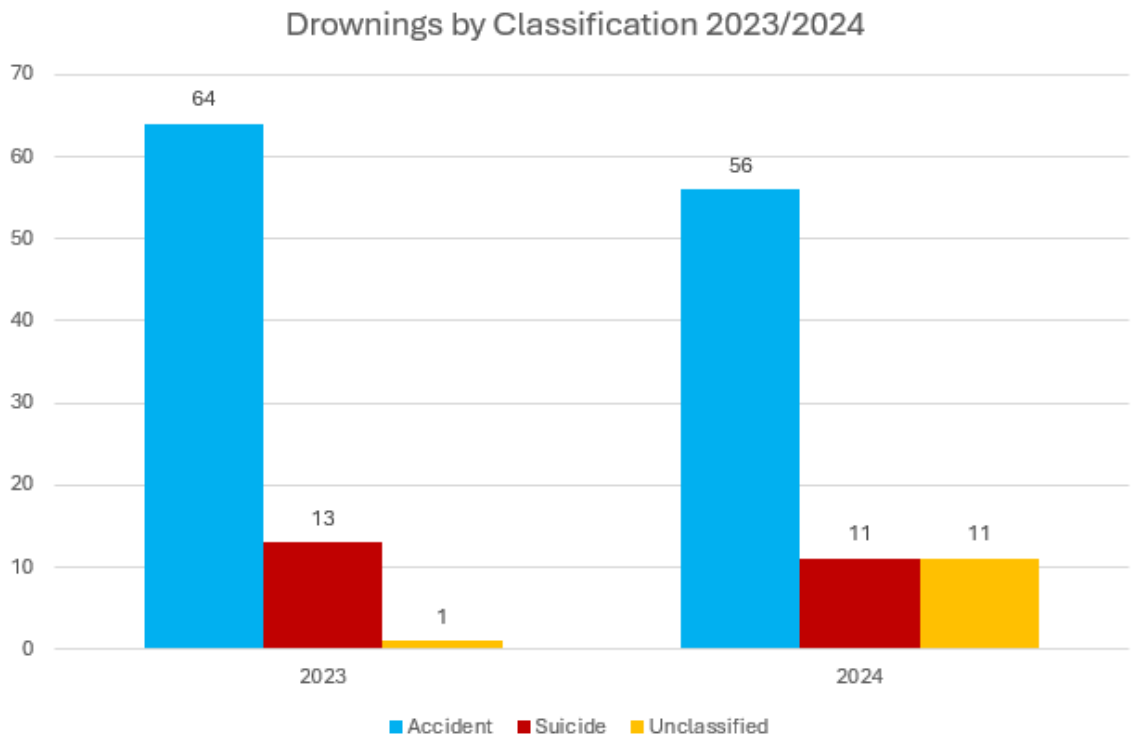
1. Absence of water safety knowledge and practice
  - Incorrect use, or lack of PPE (lifejackets, floats, etc.)
  - Inability to use ring buoys, throw bags
  - Risk of Aquatic Victim Instead of Rescue (AVIR)
  - Incorrect use of aquatic equipment (boats, boards, skis, floating toys)
2. Lack of swimming, lifesaving and/or survival skills
3. Absence of appropriate supervision (lifeguards, parents or guardians)
4. Overestimating abilities and underestimating conditions
5. Accidental or unexpected entry to water
  - Slips and falls into water, especially around rivers, canals, and docks
6. Weather conditions that affect visibility and stability (wind, rain, fog, temperature)
  - Affects both land and water-based activity
7. Water conditions (cold water shock, depth, submerged objects, currents and rip currents, waves, rapids)
8. Pre-existing medical conditions and medications
9. Consumption of alcohol and other drugs
10. Excessive "horseplay" or over exuberant behaviour

## A synopsis of some general preventive and management actions:

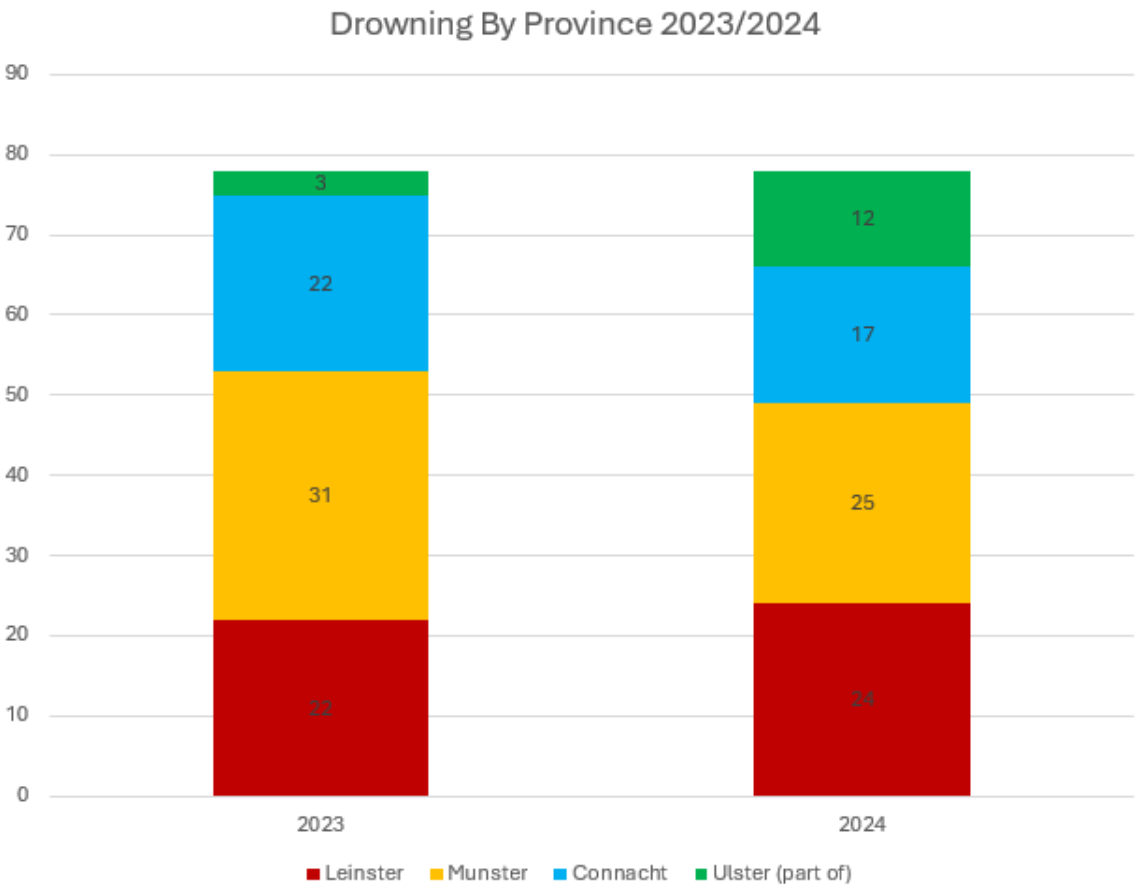
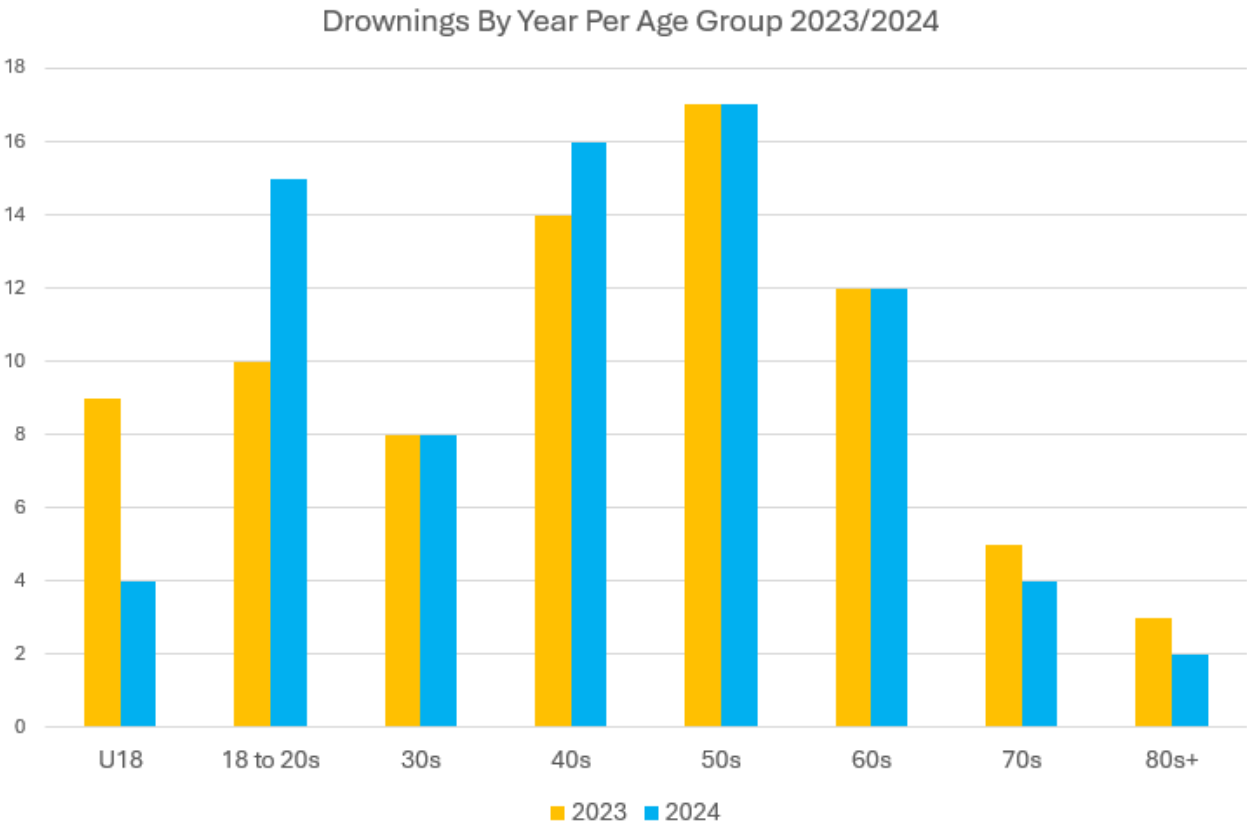
1. Public education by Water Safety Ireland regarding hazards and safe behaviors
2. Teaching children to stay away from water when unsupervised through the WSI PAWS (Primary Aquatics Water Safety) program
3. Continual adult supervision of children
4. WSI media campaigns that drowning can happen quickly and quietly
5. Promote in WSI press announcements, the restriction of alcohol provision before or during aquatic activities
6. Provision by Water Safety Ireland of properly trained and equipped lifeguards
7. Provision of rescue services
8. Water Safety Ireland Risk Assessments that include assessments of local hazard warning notices, access to emergency response and availability of resuscitation skills/facilities and other factors
9. Development by Water Safety Ireland of rescue and resuscitation skills among public and user groups
10. Coordination by Water Safety Ireland with user group associations concerning hazard awareness and safe behaviours
11. Wearing of adequate lifejackets and Personal Flotation Devices when boating
12. Fencing and doors to isolate outdoor aquatic environments.



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

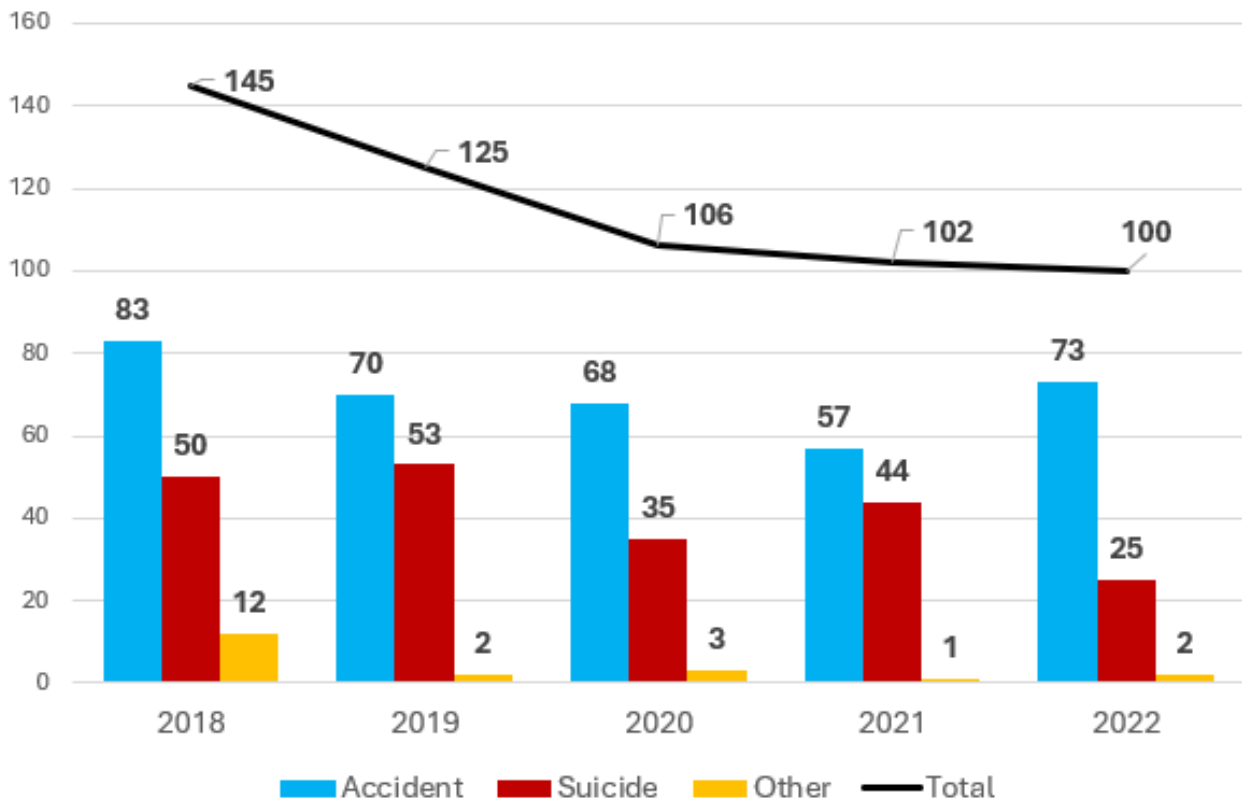


ANNUAL REPORT 2024

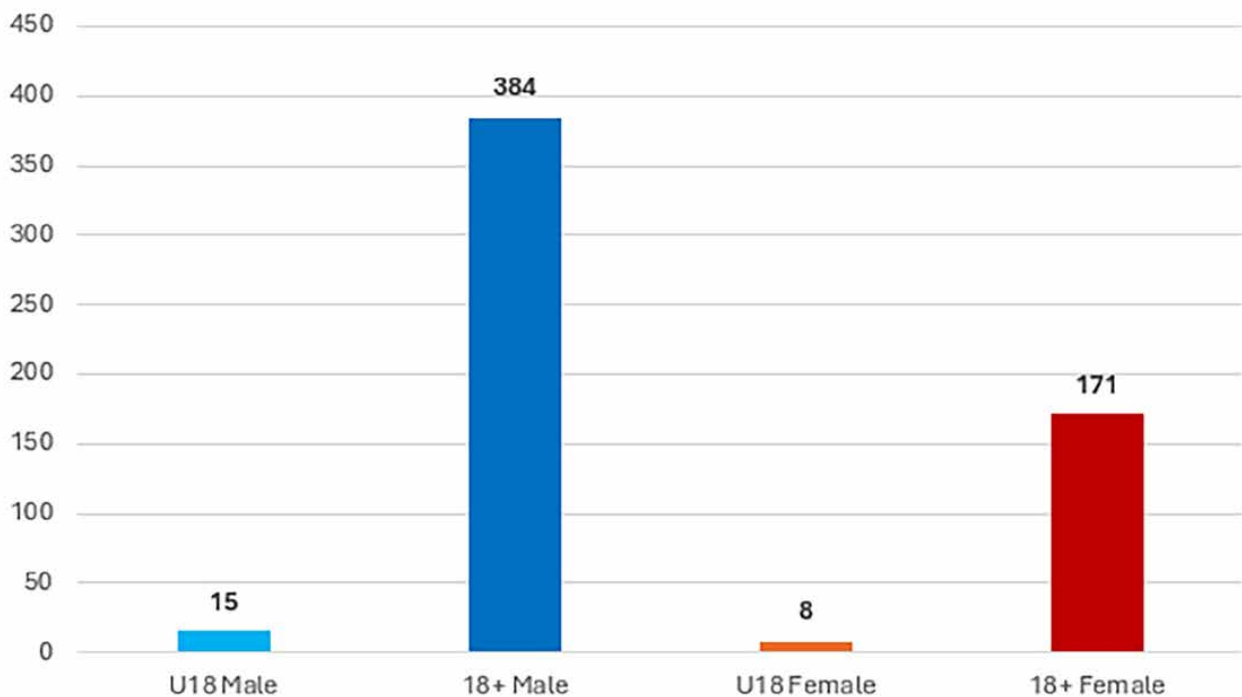


## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Drowning by Classification (578) 2018 to 2022



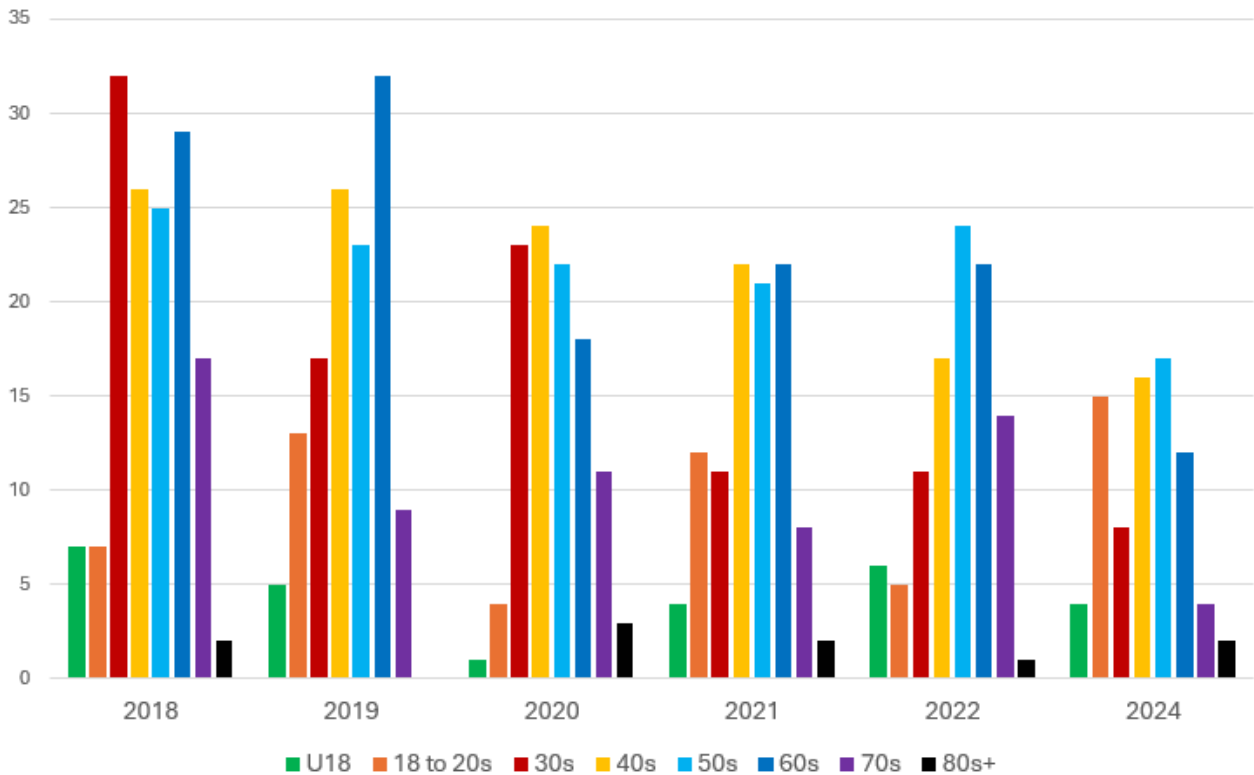
Total Drownings (578) by Reported Sex 2018 to 2022



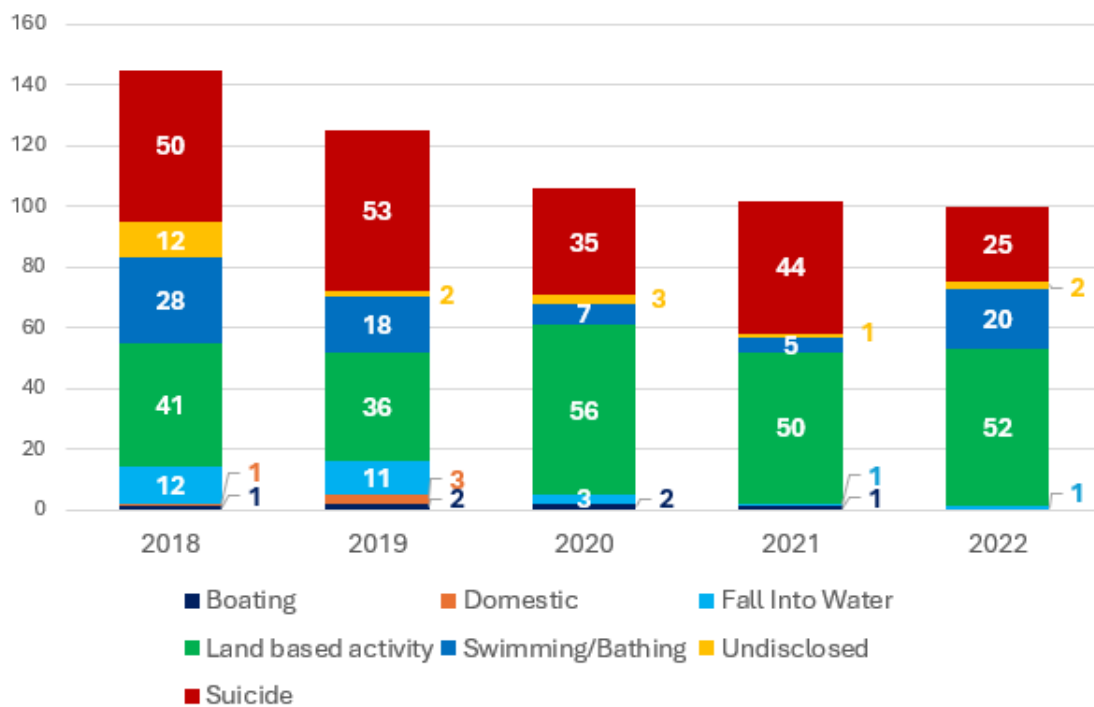


# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Drownings By Year Per Age Group 2018 to 2022

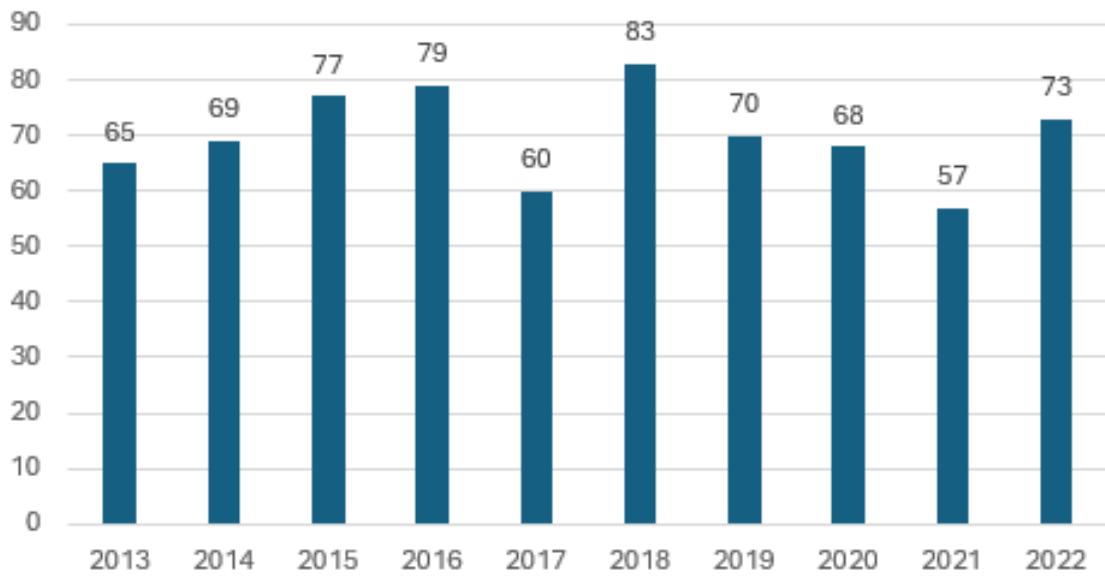


Accidental Drownings (351) Per Year 2018 to 2022

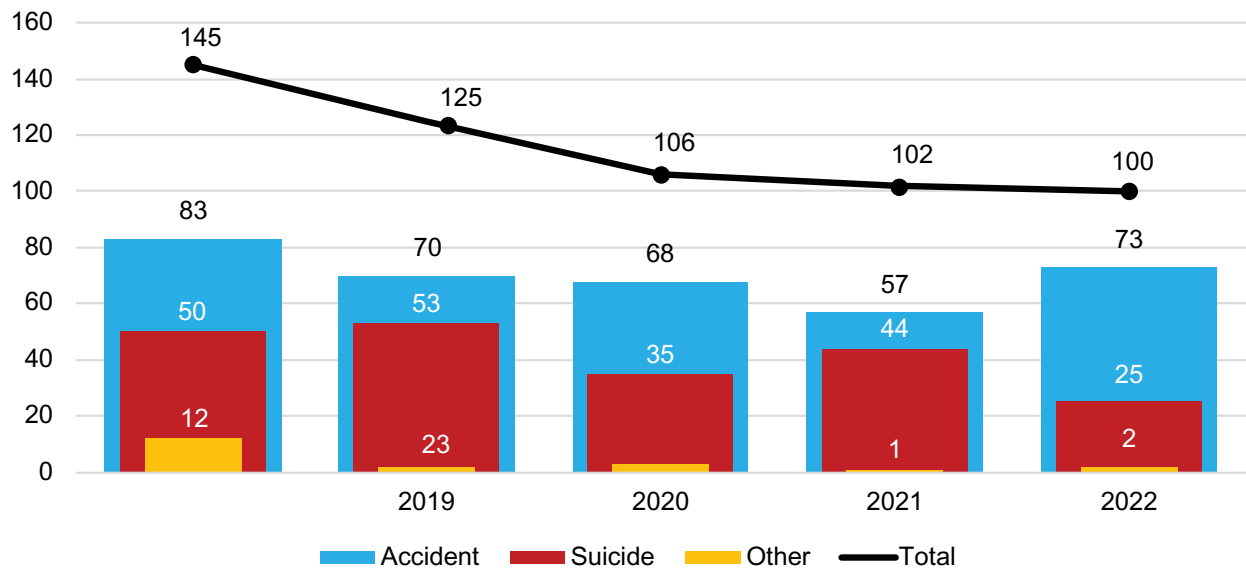


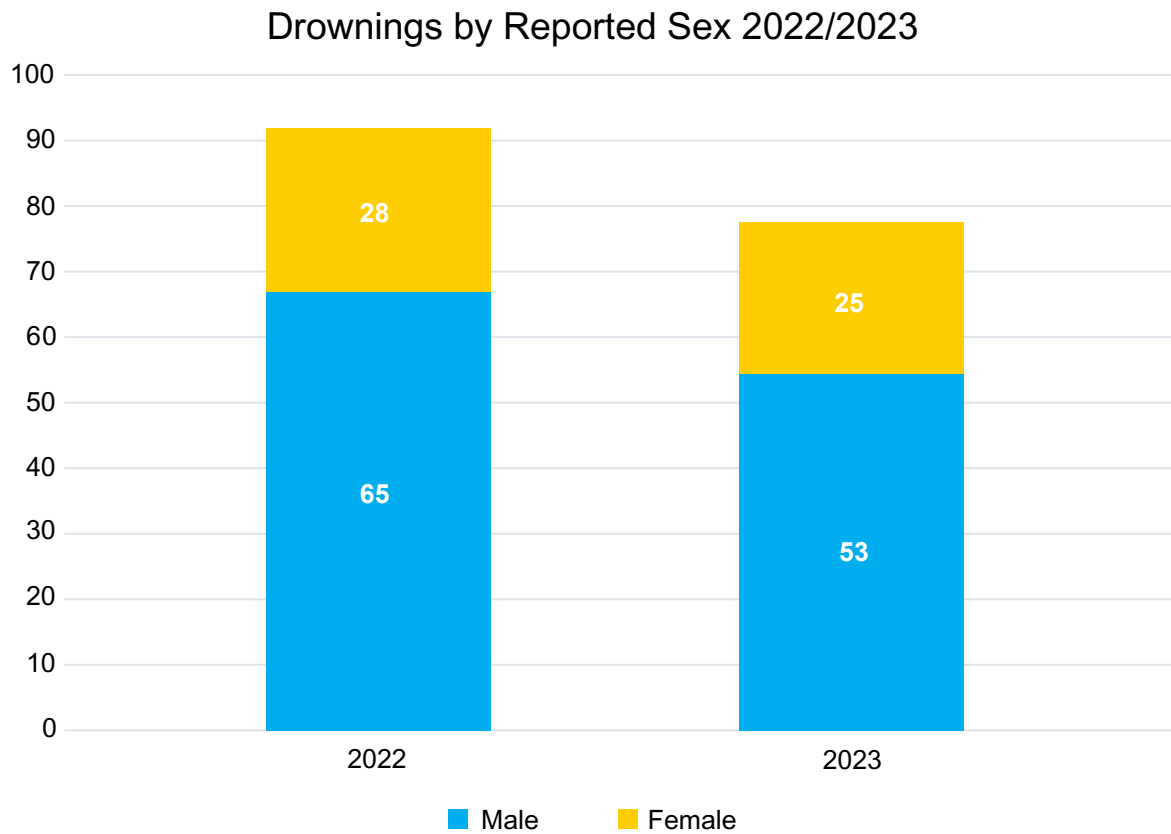
## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

### Accidental Drownings 2013 to 2022



### Drowning by Classification 2018 to 2022





\*Any interpretation of the figures must be exercised with caution because they are provisional, pending supplementary documentation and therefore subject to change pending further correspondence.



## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

County	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total	%	% Change '13-'17 and '18-'22
Carlow		2	4	1	2	9	1.60%	0.00%
Cavan	5	1	2	4		12	2.10%	-14.30%
Clare	6	4	6	3	7	26	4.50%	-38.10%
Cork	22	13	11	18	9	73	12.60%	-14.10%
Donegal	8	10	4	6	5	33	5.70%	0.00%
Dublin	22	23	24	18	20	107	18.50%	-11.60%
Galway	13	20	8	8	11	60	10.40%	22.40%
Kerry	7	6	5	4	4	26	4.50%	23.80%
Kildare	7	3	2	4	1	17	2.90%	-34.60%
Kilkenny	2	1	2	1	1	7	1.20%	-50.00%
Laois	1	1	3		2	7	1.20%	133.30%
Leitrim	1	2	1	2	2	8	1.40%	0.00%
Limerick	10	10	2	3	5	30	5.20%	-41.20%
Longford	1			1	2	4	0.70%	-55.60%
Louth	3	7	4	3	1	18	3.10%	80.00%
Mayo	3	4	5	1	3	16	2.80%	-40.70%
Meath	2	1	3		3	9	1.60%	-67.90%
Monaghan			1	2		3	0.50%	-70.00%
Offaly	2	3	2		4	11	1.90%	37.50%
Roscommon	7	2	2	3	2	16	2.80%	100.00%
Sligo	5	2	3	1	2	13	2.20%	-13.30%
Tipperary	6	1	1		2	10	1.70%	-60.00%
Waterford	6	3	3	7	3	22	3.80%	15.80%
Westmeath				3	2	5	0.90%	500%*
Wexford	3	3	5	7	2	20	3.50%	25.00%
Wicklow	3	3	3	2	5	16	2.80%	45.50%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-12.70%</b>

Table 2 Final 2018 to 2022 Total Drowning by County

**\* Co. Westmeath did not report any drownings between 2013 and 2017, therefore one drowning is considered a 100% increase from zero**

## Notes

[illegible]

## **Protected Disclosures**

Procedures are in place for the making of protected disclosures in accordance with section 21(1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, as amended by the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022.

An Annual report required under section 22(1) of the Act has been published. From 01 January to 31 December 2024, the Chief Executive of WSI, in the context of their role as a prescribed person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, received no protected disclosures from parties external or internal to WSI and relating to third parties.

## **Business Conduct**

In accordance with Goal 6 of the Water Safety Ireland Strategic Development Plan 2023-2027, Water Safety Ireland has taken measures to ensure that the organisation is compliant with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and all relevant amendments thereof, as well as all requirements of the Charities Regulator. Furthermore, endeavors have been made to ensure compliance with all employment legislation and other relevant codes and legislation. WSI works closely with the Department of Rural and Community Development to ensure these requirements are met and accurately reported.





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Rialtas na hÉireann  
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