

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland





Catherine Connolly,
President of Ireland
Patron of Water Safety Ireland

Chair's Statement



On behalf of all our members, I am honoured to present Water Safety Ireland's Annual Report for 2025. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the dedicated members of our Area Committees, Commissions, and Working Groups for their outstanding contributions throughout the year.

Their commitment, expertise, and voluntary service continue to strengthen our organisation and advance our mission of reducing drownings and promoting safer behaviours around water.

I also wish to acknowledge the work of our staff at Head Office, whose professionalism and dedication support every aspect of Water Safety Ireland's operations. Together with our volunteers and members nationwide, they ensure that our programmes, campaigns, and services continue to make a meaningful difference in communities across Ireland.

This year held particular significance as Water Safety Ireland celebrated its 80th anniversary. Since 1945, the organisation has played a leading role in protecting lives through water safety education, advocacy, training, and community engagement. Over eight decades, generations of volunteers, instructors, lifeguards, and supporters have helped foster a safer relationship with water for people across the country. As we marked this important milestone, we honoured their legacy while continuing to build on their achievements for future generations.

Throughout 2025, Water Safety Ireland volunteers remained actively engaged in communities nationwide, delivering essential training in swimming, lifesaving, basic life support, and rescue skills, while promoting water safety awareness through local initiatives and outreach programmes. Their efforts continue to equip people of all ages with the knowledge and skills needed to enjoy aquatic environments safely and confidently.

I commend the dedication of our Area Committees, instructors, examiners, and course organisers, whose commitment ensures that future generations of lifesavers are trained to the highest standards and prepared to serve as lifeguards in pools and open water locations throughout Ireland. Their contribution remains fundamental to the success of our organisation and to the safety of the communities we serve.

One of the highlights of the year was National Water Safety Awareness Week, held from the 19th to the 25th of May 2025. Supported by Water Safety Ireland Area Committees nationwide, the campaign delivered a strong and consistent public safety message through a broad range of media channels. Centred around the theme "Enjoy the Water. Respect the Risk.", the campaign encouraged people to pause before taking risks, prepare for changing conditions, and look out for one another while enjoying recreational activities on or near water.

Throughout the week, we highlighted important drowning prevention data to reinforce key safety messages. The campaign emphasised that many drownings occur during everyday land-based activities near water, such as walking, fishing, cycling, driving, and hiking, demonstrating that water safety is a shared responsibility for everyone, not only those participating in water sports. Through community engagement, media outreach, and the dedication of volunteers across the country, the campaign successfully encouraged meaningful conversations about water safety among families, friends, and communities.

The fourth World Drowning Prevention Day was also marked with the continued support of our volunteers and partners, who joined a global effort to raise awareness of drowning prevention and honour those whose lives have been lost. These initiatives continue to play an important role in reinforcing the message that drowning is preventable and that everyone has a role to play in keeping themselves and others safe around water.

It was another outstanding year for Lifesaving Sport, both nationally and internationally. The achievements of our athletes, coaches, and clubs continue to demonstrate the high standards of lifesaving excellence that exist throughout Ireland. Their dedication, discipline, and teamwork are a source of pride for Water Safety Ireland and serve as an inspiration to young lifesavers across the country.

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 future development of Water Safety Ireland. Closely aligned with Ireland’s National Drowning Prevention Strategy (2018–2027), this work ensures that our efforts contribute meaningfully to long-term national objectives and evidence-based approaches to reducing drownings.

While we celebrate many achievements, we also remember the lives tragically lost to drowning during the year. On behalf of Water Safety Ireland, I extend our deepest sympathies to all families, friends, and communities affected by these losses. Every drowning is a tragedy, and each reinforces the importance of our collective efforts to educate, advocate, and promote safer behaviours around water. Through ongoing research, data analysis, and targeted interventions, we remain committed to reducing these preventable deaths and sustaining the encouraging long-term downward trend in drownings.

In closing, I wish to extend our deepest condolences to the families of the valued members we sadly lost during the year. We remain profoundly grateful for their contributions to our shared mission of creating a safer society in which lives are protected from the tragedy of drowning.

As we reflect on 80 years of Water Safety Ireland, we can take pride in what has been achieved while recognising that our work remains as important today as it was in 1945. Together, through education, training, advocacy, and community action, we continue to save lives and create a culture where water can be enjoyed safely by all.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication, compassion, and commitment. 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.

We strive to reduce fatalities and injuries 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.



2025 in Review

93,427
Certificates issued

Summer Week
locations in
22
counties

683
Mentions in national
and local media

21
SEIKO
Just In Time
Awards
and 14 Rescue
Appreciation Award
recipients honoured
for saving 29 lives at
risk of drowning

316
People rescued
by lifeguards
trained and
assessed by Water
Safety Ireland

53,646
Primary
Aquatics
Water Safety
certificates
issued to
primary
school pupils

72
Waterway
Risk
Assessments
completed

245
lost children
found and
reunited by
Lifeguards with
their guardians

**2 Gold,
4 Silver and
1 Bronze Medal**
won at the European Lifesaving
Championships by Team Ireland

Water Safety Ireland Council



Clare McGrath

Clare is an active Water Safety Ireland Instructor, Examiner, Tutor and International Referee and she has worked as a referee at the highest level at European and World competitions. Clare has been involved in the organisation of Regional, National, and International lifesaving competitions, both pool and beach for 20 years. She worked as a Water Safety Development Officer for Clare County Council and is recently retired. Clare is currently a member of the board of ILSE (International Lifesaving Europe) and a board member of ILS (International Life Saving Federation).



Philip Keleghan - Completed term on 28th February 2025

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.



Martin Bourke

Martin Bourke has held a number of senior positions in the Irish public service relating to Property Management, Public Procurement and Corporate Affairs. In a career spanning 40 years, he has advised and worked with many Government Ministers and sat on a number of Executive Management Boards.

On retiring from the public service, Martin now provides consultancy services in the area of public affairs, property and procurement.

Martin holds a Masters in Business from the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, UCD in addition to post graduate qualifications from the Honourable Society of Kings Inns and the Institute of Directors. He is a Chartered Director of the Institute of Directors.

Martin's passion is swimming. He is the current Chair of Meath Masters Swimming Club and for many years has participated in open water swimming events throughout Ireland and Europe. He is also a Swim Ireland open water swimming coach.



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, a passion that continues to this day.

Throughout his teenage and early adult years, he was a lifeguard, Water Safety Ireland Instructor, Pool Lifeguard provider, IRB Crew, Coxswain & Instructor, as well as a Lifesaving Sport Coach & Team Manager in Donegal. He also instructed for 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.

With over a decade of experience in organising both pool and beach competitions nationally, through his roles as a member and former chair of the WSI Sports Commission. Simon is also a former member of the International Life Saving Federation of Europe Sports Commission. He currently serves as the Vice Chairman of the Council of Water Safety Ireland, and is the Chair of the WSI Technical Committee.



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 a qualified Executive Coach and also holds an MBA and Diploma in Corporate Governance. Natalie is also a member of Dublin Chamber Council and Vice President of Chambers Ireland.



Leo Mahon

Leo is a water safety volunteer from County Kildare, with over thirty-five years of involvement in aquatic safety, lifesaving, and education. A qualified Water Safety Instructor and Examiner, he is dedicated to promoting water safety standards and supporting the development of young people through training and education programmes.

He holds a broad range of water safety qualifications, including Instructor, Examiner, Coach, Pool Lifeguard Tutor and ILSE Risk Assessor, and has worked nationally and internationally as a pool lifeguard and trained through a number of organisations. Leo has been actively involved in lifeguard training for more than thirty years.

Leo currently serves as PRO for his local Water Safety Area Committee and has previously held roles as Treasurer, Vice Chair, and Chairperson. He has been a continuous member of the Kildare Local Area Committee since 1991. In 2021, he was appointed to the Council of Water Safety Ireland, where he has since served as Chairperson of the Education Commission and currently chairs the Lifeguarding Skills and Syllabus Development Commission. He is also a member of the Water Safety Ireland Technical Committee and has previously contributed to the Marketing Commission.

His qualifications related to aquatic environment include PHECC First Aid Responder and First

Responder Instructor, Irish Sailing Association Levels 1, 2, and 3 (Safety Boat), Navigation Certificates, Rescue 3 Swift Water and Flood Rescue Technician, Competency in Basic Sea Survival, Swim Ireland swimming and coaching awards, and Irish Underwater Council Snorkel Diver Instructor certification.

Two highlights over years are the championing Lifesaving Sport in Kildare, leading and preparing teams for local and National competition at all levels and the development of a National Inland Training centre on Blessington Lakes and future development of world class Lifesaving Training Centre.



Dervla Quinn

Dervla qualified as a solicitor in 1992 and is an associate member of the Irish Tax Institute since 1995, a member of the Board of the Residential Tenancies Board from 2004 to 2008 and a continuing member of the Residential Tenancies Disputes Committee since 2004. Dervla is involved in the Riding for Disabled Association and has been a coach to disabled riders for over 30 years. Born in Nigeria, Dervla is an avid sea swimmer since childhood. She is a year round sea swimmer active in the Greystones Co. Wicklow swim community. In October of 2018 she was rescued from the sea which inspired an interest in promoting water safety.



Bernie Gaines

Bernie a long-time member of Water Safety Ireland, with 40 (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 include 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, a native of County Clare, has been an active and dedicated member of Water Safety Ireland for more than two decades. Over the course of his involvement, he has contributed to the promotion of water safety and lifesaving across the county and the country. He currently serves on the Water Safety Clare Area Committee, where he previously held the role of Chairperson.

Deeply committed to every facet of water safety, Patrick plays multiple roles within the organisation. He is an experienced Water Safety Instructor, Coach, and Referee, and he also serves as an IRB Senior Tutor, sharing his expertise with the next generation of lifesavers. Nationally, he is the current Chairperson of the Lifesaving Sport Commission, having formerly chaired the Rescue Commission.

Patrick has represented Water Safety Ireland on the international stage as part of the Irish Lifesaving

Team's coaching staff and as a referee contributing to the team's efforts at numerous European and World Championships. At home, he remains actively involved in coaching lifesaving sport teams for both pool-based and ocean competitions, helping to elevate the standard of the sport.

His instruction extends to Inshore Rescue Boats within County Clare, and he regularly examines courses at a national level.

Patrick brings more than 30 years of experience within the technology sector, where he has held a variety of senior management positions.

James O'Sullivan



James has been immersed in Water Safety Ireland activities since a child, 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' qualification in the mid 1980's James went on to register 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 a number of 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 and county manager Lola O'Sullivan, has reinvigorated his passion and activities within Water safety. In particular, James has been instrumental to the success and development of the sports activities within the Waterford team providing administrative and financial support, to Micheal Cuddihy and coaching to the Nipper and Junior teams.

James has also competed for Waterford in the Masters team and regularly medals at both the sea and pool competitions. James won three masters medals in Italy at the 2019 European Surf lifesaving competition. James is passionate about Water Safety Ireland with a strong commercial and governance perspective to be able to provide strategic level board guidance to our organisation.

Sarah Probert



Sarah Probert is a co-founder and partner at Pt78, a marketing effectiveness consultancy, with extensive international experience leading teams and managing marketing campaigns across global organizations and startups in the mobile, telecom, software, internet, music, and IT industries. Back in Ireland after spending two decades in the UK, Sarah is delighted to be back living by the sea. An enthusiastic all year round sea swimmer, Sarah is passionate about the importance of safe access to water activities and water sports for everyone. Committed to giving back to her industry and local community, Sarah has served on the board of the Marketing Society of Ireland for several years, supports young women in sport through her committee role in her local hockey club, and has recently been junior coordinator on her tennis club committee, championing opportunities for youth engagement and development.



Pamela McGrath

Pamela is from Co. Clare and has been involved in Water Safety and other aquatic activities for over thirty years. She is currently a member of the Water Safety Clare area committee. She is actively involved in Surf Lifesaving Sport as a coach and international referee.

She is currently chairperson of the Rescue IRB Commission.



Edwina Frawley

Edwina is from Limerick and has over twenty years of experience as a Management Accountant in the Public Service. She started swimming through Triathlon and now focuses on Open Water swimming. Edwina is a Water Safety qualified swim instructor at UL Sports facility.



Aidan Collins

Aidan has been involved in Water Safety for over 40 years. Starting with schools' competitions, nationals and moving onto Instructor, Swim Teacher and Examiner. He has volunteered in Wexford, Meath (& Cavan) and in multiple pools in Dublin, most recently the National Aquatic Centre. For the last 5 years he has also been a member of the WSI Marketing Commission.

Outside of Water Safety, he is a Chartered Accountant working in the technology sector and in addition to his Business degree he holds a Masters in Digital Marketing and is a practicing Personal, Business & Executive Coach. He is a volunteer rider and board member with Blood Bikes East (an Emergency Medical Transport Service) and is married with two adult daughters, both qualified as lifeguards!

Council Meetings 2025 Attendance Record

In addition to the Council meetings, members also attended Commission meetings, conferences, exhibitions, and other water safety events throughout the year on behalf of the WSI Council.

As of 31 December 2025, the Council had 7 (53%) female and 6 (46%) male members. The Council therefore meets the Government target of a minimum of 40% representation of each gender in the membership of State Boards.

Clare McGrath	6 of 6	
Simon McGarrigle	5 of 6	
Philip Keleghan	1 of 1	(Completed term on 28th February 2025)
Leo Mahon	4 of 6	
Dervla Quinn	5 of 6	
Patrick O'Grady	6 of 6	
Bernie Gaines	5 of 6	
James O'Sullivan	5 of 6	
Natalie McGuinness	3 of 6	
Sarah Probert	4 of 5	(Commenced on 1st April 2025)
Pamela McGrath	5 of 5	(Commenced on 1st April 2025)
Aidan Collins	5 of 5	(Commenced on 1st April 2025)
Martin Bourke	5 of 5	(Commenced on 1st April 2025)
Edwina Frawley	4 of 5	(Commenced on 1st April 2025)
Mary Plunkett	1 of 1	(Resigned on 10th March 2025)
Christine Moloney	0 of 0	(Resigned on 16th January 2025)



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 Officer & Office Manager
- **Lynda Deane**, Corporate Affairs Manager
- **Hannah Burke**, Finance Officer and Office Manager
- **Ciara Samy**, Senior Office Administrator
- **Jocelyn Cunningham**, Events & Courses Administrator and Risk Assessment Co-Ordinator
- **Alison Elstone**, Finance Administrator
- **Frank Hughes**, Business Development Executive
- **Anna Grant**, Education Manager
- **Ciara Gleeson**, Education Development Executive
- **Rosie O'Regan**, Regional Education Officer
- **Patrick Coleman**, Regional Education Officer
- **Jamie Farrelly**, Regional Education Officer
- **Andrew Hayden**, Regional Education Officer
- **David Fitzpatrick**, Technical Officer
- **Laura Daly**, Technical Officer
- **Michaela McEntire**, Lifesaving Administrator
- **Ruby Hurst**, Lifesaving Administrator
- **Paul McGowan**, Marketing Executive
- **Keira Burke**, Marketing Executive
- **Lisa Mullaly**, Marketing Executive
- **Jennifer O'Neil**, Board Secretary, HR Officer & Compliance Officer
- **David Ruch**, Data Officer
- **Alanna Scully**, Volunteer Support Manager & Garda Vetting Liaison

Water Safety Ireland employees participated in 526 hours of training activities in 2025.

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

Ulysses House
Foley Street
Dublin 1

Bankers

Bank of Ireland

Mainguard Street
Galway

Solicitors

Sheehan & Co. Solicitors

16 Merchants Road
Galway

Alastair Purdy LLP

Corrib Castle
1 Waterside
Woodquay
Galway

Water Safety Ireland – Commissions

Technical Commission

Simon McGarrigle, Chair

James O’Sullivan

Leo Mahon

Edwina Frawley

Pamela McGrath

Laura Daly, Technical Officer, Commenced 24th October 2025

David Fitzpatrick, Technical Officer, Finished August 2025

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.
- Approve all WSI syllabi & publications.
- Oversee the arrangements for biennial WSI Examiners Conference, including regional conferences as required.
- Identify and prioritise the new projects with Commissions.



Audit and Risk Commission:

Martin Bourke, Chair

Tom Keating

Lorcan Maule

Philip Keleghan, Commenced March 1 2025

Pamela McGrath

Jennifer O'Neil, WSI HR and Compliance Officer

Lynda Deane, WSI Corporate Affairs Manager

Duties:

To provide oversight to the following:

- Assist the Council of WSI in its oversight of the integrity of WSI's internal assurances, including the strategic processes for risk, internal control, and governance.
- Assist the Council of WSI in its oversight of financial and operational reporting.
- Monitor, on behalf of the Council, the communication between the Executive and the Comptroller and Auditor General, who act as WSI's external auditors.
- Monitor, on behalf of the Council, the effectiveness and objectivity of internal auditors.
- Assist the Council in its oversight of the Executive's risk management framework, monitoring its effectiveness through functional implementation in the 'second line of defence' and its performance to protect against and mitigate risks in the 'first line of defence'.
- Monitor, on behalf of the Council, the governance of Water Safety Area Committees and Council Commissions.
- Monitor and review, on behalf of the Council, anti-fraud policies, protected disclosures processes, and arrangements for specific investigations as appropriate.
- Where appropriate, advise Council on proposals for tendering for internal audit services, or for purchase of non-audit services from contractors who provide audit services.
- Review its own effectiveness and performance.

Marketing Commission:

Aidan Collins, Chair

Natalie McGuinness

Morgan Fagg

Pádraig O'Céidigh

Roger Sweeney, Deputy CEO & Marketing Manager

Paul McGowan, WSI Marketing Executive

Lisa Mullaly, WSI Marketing Executive

- 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 Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents & 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 Local Authorities Members Association Awards.
- Develop and implement strategy to 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.

Rescue and Inshore Rescue Boats Commission:

Patrick O'Grady, Chair up to June 2025

Pamela McGrath, Chair since June 2025

Valerie Stundon

Ronnie Horan

Breda Collins

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.
- Liaise with Community Rescue Boats Ireland.
- Develop a skilled trainer base to facilitate the training of CRBI personnel in rescue on inland and maritime waters.
- Develop an Inshore rescue syllabus in co-operation with CRBI.
- Oversee the provision of the Open Water Safety Awareness courses in conjunction with the WSI Business Development Officer and provide tutors for same.
- Develop and deliver a syllabus for training lifeguards in the use of IRB's and other power craft.
- 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.
- Provide for and arrange 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.

Sports Commission:

Simon McGarrigle, Chair until June 2025

Patrick O'Grady, Chair since June 2025

Alison Deane

Kate O Donovan

Caroline Bentley

Daniel Wrafter

Pauline Vaughan, Commenced June 2025

Elaine Noble, Commenced June 2025

Ruby Hurst, WSI Lifesaving Administrator

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.



Leana Liddane at the European Lifesaving Championships in Poland

Lifeguarding Skills & Syllabus Development Commission:

Leo Mahon, Chair

Graham Malone

Pauline Jordan

Paul Murphy

Shane O'Brien

Sean O'Keeffe

David Fitzpatrick, WSI Technical Officer, Finished August 2025

Laura Daly, WSI Technical Officer

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).
- Develop 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 Working Group.
- 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

Anna Grant, WSI Education Manager

Ciara Gleeson, WSI Education Development Executive

Duties:

- Support the promotion of measures, including the advancement of education, related to the prevention of accidents in the aquatic environment.
- Support, maintain and develop training and water safety awareness programmes within the Irish Educational System.
- Develop and implement school-based programmes at pre-school, primary and post primary and level.
- Hold Hands, PAWS and WISE programmes: monitor, track and promote and provide data to HQ for national records.
- Liaise with the Department of Education on the implementation of the Leaving Certificate programme.
- Develop and implement the Teachers Training Courses.
- Manage the overall WSI syllabi, responsibility for co-ordination of all syllabus parts.
- Development of further QQI or related awards.
- Review and update all children's welfare, protection & educational documents.
- Arrange seminars for Designated Liaison Persons.
- Liaise with the Department of Education to maximise water safety awareness training and public awareness 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:

Edwina Frawley, Chair

Deirdre Webster

Brid Graham

Amelia Reilly

Darren Ryan

Laura Daly, WSI Technical Officer

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.
- Develop and implement a strategy for increasing the number of WSI 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 at IFSTA.
- Ensure WSI is represented on the White Flag Jury.
- Evaluate the number of swim certificates in WSI.
- Review all swimming related documents and update as necessary.
- Review all relevant syllabus items annually.



Membership Development Commission:

Bernie Gaines, Chair

Dervla Quinn

Rebecca McGrory

Ita Richardson

Sarah Probert

Alanna Scully, WSI Volunteer Manager

Duties:

- Support and assist in the development of a People Framework that encompasses diversity and inclusion.
- Support the Volunteer Manager in developing and implementing the Volunteer Charter.
- Support the preparation and implementation of a strategy to increase the membership numbers.
- Support and assist in the improvement of membership and communication with WSACs.
- Assist in the development of a national pathway to assist youth members to move from a class participation role to an active instructor role.
- Oversee the arrangements for biennial WSI Members' Conference.



Media Partnerships

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 683 mentions.

PRESS RELEASES

- **Festive Dips Joint Appeal Water Safety Ireland**
- **National Awards Ceremony**
- **August Bank Holiday**
- **World Drowning Prevention Day**
- **Warm Weather**
- **June Bank Holiday**
- **National Water Safety Awareness Week**
- **May Bank Holiday**
- **Easter Water Safety Appeal**
- **St Patrick's Day Bank Holiday**
- **Weekend ICE Safety**
- **Storm Eowyn**
- **St Brigid's Bank Holiday weekend Water Safety Appeal from Coast Guard RNLI and Water Safety Ireland**

PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

- **National Services Day Parade, September 6th**
- **National Ploughing Championships, September 16th 18th**
- **WSI National Annual Awards Ceremony, October 21st**

**BETTER
SAFE**



**THAN
SORRY**



**NEVER MIX
ALCOHOL
AND WATER
ACTIVITIES**



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

FOR ADVICE VISIT WATERSAFETY.IE

National Water Safety Awareness Week

(May 19th – May 25th)

National Water Safety Awareness Week took place from May 19th – May 25th, 2025, 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's central message, **"Enjoy the Water. Respect the Risk."**, encouraged people to pause before taking risks, be prepared for changing conditions, and look out for one another while enjoying recreational activities on or near water. Whether fishing from the shoreline, swimming, paddling, surfing, boating, or simply walking alongside rivers, canals, and lakes, the campaign reminded everyone that water safety is a shared responsibility.

National Water Safety Awareness Week also coincided with a significant milestone, as **2025 marked 80 years of Water Safety Ireland**. Since 1945, the organisation has played a leading role in reducing drownings through education, advocacy, training, and community engagement, helping generations of people develop a safer relationship with water.

Throughout the week, Water Safety Ireland shared key drowning prevention statistics to reinforce the importance of vigilance during the summer months. Data over a five year period showed that 43% of all accidental drownings occur between June and August, with July and August the most dangerous months of the year. During the same five-year period, 69% of drowning victims were male, while people in their 40s, 50s, and 60s were identified as the most at-risk age groups.

Particular emphasis was placed on the fact that 67% of accidental drownings followed land-based activities, including walking, hiking, fishing from the shore, cycling, driving, and foraging. These figures highlight how quickly everyday situations can become dangerous when taking place near water.

Through public awareness activities, community engagement, media outreach, and the support of volunteers nationwide, National Water Safety Awareness Week 2025 successfully reinforced the importance of water safety and encouraged individuals, families, and communities to start meaningful conversations that could ultimately save lives.

**ENJOY THE WATER
RESPECT
THE RISK**



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 13,570 Lifesaving certificates in 2025. A total of 21,775 Seal & Marlin certificates and badges were also issued in 2025.

Award Name	2025
Adult & Child Swimming Teacher	5
Assistant Swimming Teacher	553
Beach Lifeguard	220
Beach Lifeguard Course Tutor	20
Beach Lifeguard Revalidation	293
BLS 1	1433
BLS 2	1325
BLS 3	519
Challenge 1	165
Challenge 2	244
Disabilities Aquatics Level 1	10
Disabilities Aquatics Level 2	70
Endurance 1	229
Endurance 2	384
Instructor	89
Inland Open Water Lifeguard	9
Inland Open Water Lifeguard Revalidation	16
Lifesaving Sport Coach Assistant	12
Lifesaving Sport Coach Level 1	17
National Pool Lifeguard Level 1	269
National Pool Lifeguard Level 1 Revalidation	196
National Pool Lifeguard Level 2	961
National Pool Lifeguard Level 2 Revalidation	885
Pool Lifeguard Course Tutor	8
Rescue 1	1060
Rescue 2	811
Rescue 3	495
Rescue 4	137
Rescue 5	5



Safety 1	1167
Safety 2	1704
Safety 3	1567
Safety 4	1520
Surf 2	30
Surf Instructor Beach Safety	36
Surf Instructor Beach Safety Rev	128
Surf Rescue Boat Crew	8
Surf Rescue Boat Driver	7
Survival 1	231
Survival 2	485
Swim Teacher Lifesaving	11
Swimming Teacher	246
Swimming Teacher Tutor	12
Water Safety Awareness At Work	414
Totals	18,006



WISE

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.

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.



WATER INSIGHT, SAFETY & EDUCATION

BRINGING WATER SAFETY HOME



WATER INSIGHT, SAFETY & EDUCATION



FOLLOWING A RESCUE



WATER INSIGHT, SAFETY & EDUCATION



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 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.

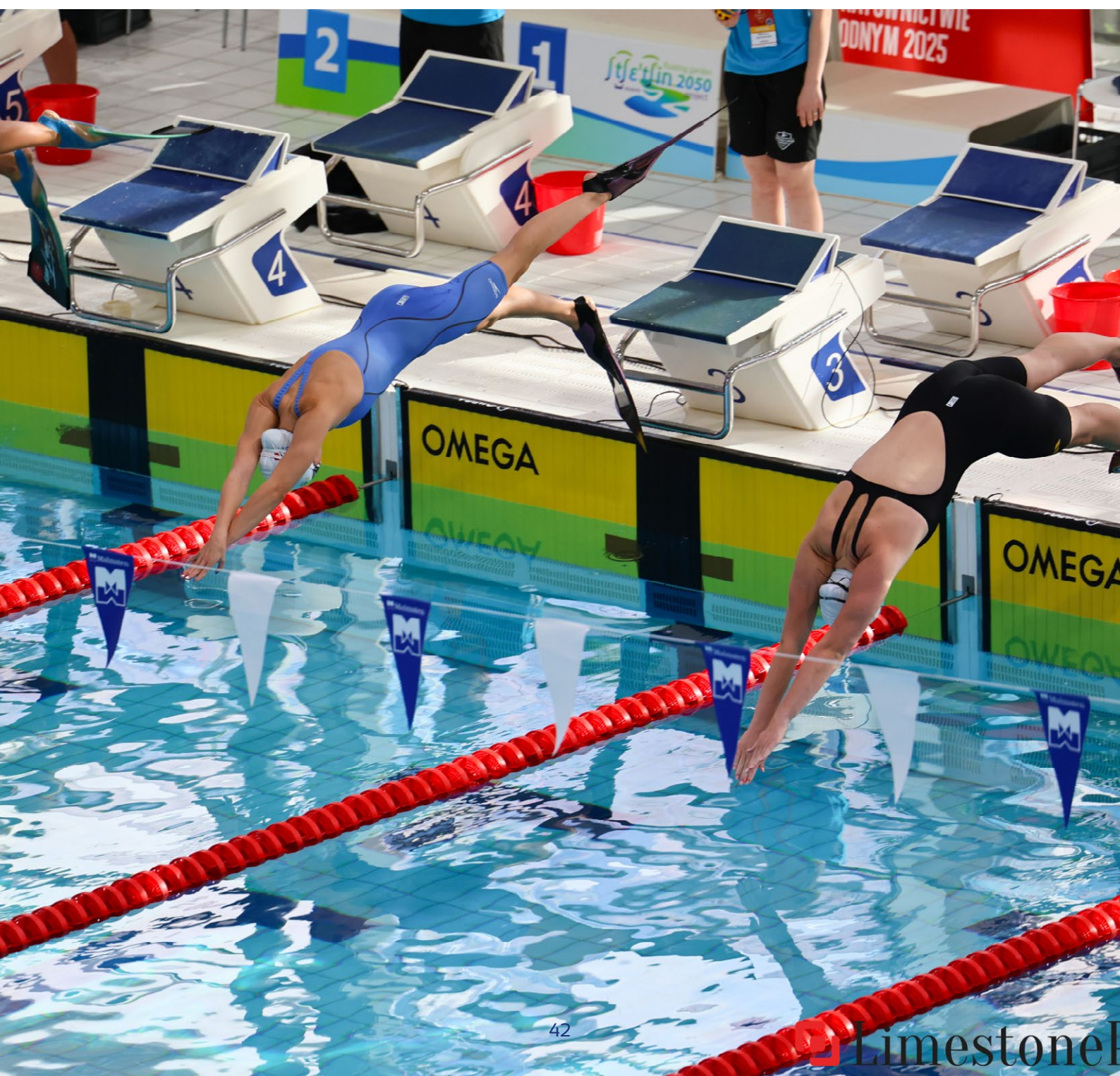


COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVENTS
Carlow	Bagenalstown	August	Swim
Carlow	Bagenallstown	June	Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Graigucullen	July	Safety
Cavan	Greaghlone Lake, Shercock	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Lough McNear, Blacklion	June/July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Annagh Lake, Butlersbridge	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Annagh Lake, Miltown	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Killykeen, Killeshandra	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Crover, Lough Sheelin	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Grownneys Wood, Lough Ramor	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Lavey Lake, Lavey	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Haltons River, Cootehill	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Fitzpatricks Shore, Lough Gowna	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Brackley Lake, Bawnboy	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Garty Lough, Arva	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Riversdale Pool, Ballinamore	Aug	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Ballyvaughan Pier	June/July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Carlow	Whitestrans Miltown	June/ July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Carlow	Mountshannon	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Flagmount	July/August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cavan	Cappa	August	Swim, Safety
Cavan	Kilkee	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Labasheeda	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Clare	Doonbeg	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Cork	Schull	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Ardfield	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Carrignavar Pool	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Bantry	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Sherkin	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Cuil Aodha	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Tragumna	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Adrigole	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Garrylucas	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Glengarriff	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Oysterhaven	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Bere Island	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Cape Clear	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Ballymacoda	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Courtmacsherry	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Youghal	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Garryvoe	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Fountainstown	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Fermoy	June/July/August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue

COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVENTS
Cork	Inch	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Tragumna	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Castletownbere	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Union Hall	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Kilcrohane	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Rosscarbery	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Garnish Pier	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Glandore	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Urhan	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Cork	Ballycotton	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, Survival, Rescue
Donegal	Creedy 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	June / July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Inis-boffin	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Portumna	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Carraroe	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Inis Oirr	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Inis Meáin	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Loughrea	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Galway	Tir an Fhai	August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
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

COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVENTS
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
Laois	Ballinakill	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Keeldra	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Corry Strand J	June & July	Swim
Leitrim	Gulladoo	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Drumshambo	June, July & August	Swi Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Cleighran Mor, Ballinaglera	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Leitrim	Rossinver	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Limerick	Glin Pier	July / August	Swim, Safety, Rescue
Longford	Annagh	July	Swim, Safety
Louth	Gyles Quay	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue, Endurance, Survival
Louth	Port Beach	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue, Endurance, Survival
Mayo	Ballina	July / August	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Ballinachalla Pier	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Claremorris	July / August	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Castlebar	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Lacken	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Clare Island	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Charlestown	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Inishturk Island	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Kilmovee	July / August	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Belmullet	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Mayo	Belmullet	July	Swim, Safety, BLS
Offaly	Birr	July	Swim, Safety, BLS, Endurance
Offaly	Banagher	July	Swim, Safety, BLS, Endurance
Offaly	County Arms	June / July / August	Swim, Safety, BLS, Endurance
Sligo	Aughris Pier	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue, Survival
Sligo	Enniscrone	July	Swim, Safety, Rescue, Survival
Tipperary North	Nenagh Leisure Centre	August	Safety, Endurance
Waterford	Boatstrand	July / August	Safety, Rescue
Waterford	Dunmore East	July	Safety Rescue
Waterford	Newtown Cove	July	Safety, Rescue
Waterford	Ardmore	July / August	Safety, Rescue

COUNTY	LOCATION	DATE	EVENTS
Westmeath	Athlone	April, July, August	Safety, Rescue
Wexford	Rosslare	July	Swim, Safety
Wexford	Bunclody	July	Safety, Rescue
Wexford	Cahore Pier	July	Safety, Rescue
Wexford	Kilmore	August	Swim. Safety
Wexford	Fethard	July	Safety, Rescue
Wicklow	Greystones Harbour	June, July	Safety, Rescue
Wicklow	Wicklow Harbour	June, July	Swim, Safety, Rescue



WSI Representation at National Level

ACESA
(Assoc Chief Executives of State Agencies)
– Joanne Walsh

Marine Safety Communications
Working Group
– Roger Sweeney

Community Rescue Boats Ireland
– Ronnie Horan

Federation of Irish Sport
– Ruby Hurst

WSI Internal Auditor –
Alison Elstone and Paul Burke

National Designated Liaison Person
– Ashling Nesbitt

An Taisce Blue Flag Jury
– Ronnie Horan

WSI Representation at International Level 2025

International Life Saving (ILS) World Board
member – Clare McGrath

ILSE (Europe) Europe Board member
– Clare McGrath

ILSE (Europe) Sports Commission
– Daniel Wrafter

ILSE (Europe) Management & Administration
Commission – Joanne Walsh

ILSE Drowning Prevention Commission
– Roger Sweeney

ILSE (Europe) Rescue Commission
– Breda Collins

International Federation of Swimming Teachers
Association – Deirdre Webster

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
(ROSPA) – Ciara Gleeson

College of Referees Panel ILSE Europe
– Clare McGrath

World Health Assembly
– Joanne Walsh and Roger Sweeney

World Drowning Prevention Conference
– Roger Sweeney, Brendan McGrath,
Frank Hughes, Joanne Walsh

WHO World Drowning Prevention Day
Working Group – Roger Sweeney

European Lifesaving Championships
– Chief Referee - Clare McGrath
– Referee - Quentin Roche

Conferences

Water Safety Ireland Members Conference,
Shearwater Hotel, Co. Galway
1st March 2025

DLP Seminar,
Athlone Springs, Westmeath
27th September 2025

Water Safety Ireland National Awards Ceremony,
UCD, Dublin
21st October 2025.

Life Governor's Meeting,
The Kilkenny Ormonde Hotel,
30th of September 2025

Risk Assessments

Water Safety Ireland members conducted 74 ILSE Risk Assessments at bathing areas and waterways across the country in 2025, 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 provides expert advice to Local Authorities, state agencies, and private enterprises on a wide range of water safety matters.

Keane Park, Youghal, Cork	Coolmaine Beach, Cork
Garretstown Beach, Cork	Harbour View, Cork
Fountainstown Beach, Cork	Clonea Beach, Waterford
Elly Bay Belmullet, Mayo	Ardmore, Waterford
Dugort Beach, Achill Island, Mayo	Kiliney Beach, Dlr
Dooega Beach, Mayo	Seapoint Beach, Dlr
Cross Beach, Mayo	Clashganny Beach, Carlow
Termon Beach, Mayo	Carraigaholt, Clare
Garryvoe, Cork	Mountshannon Beach, Clare
Fanore Beach, Clare	Cappa Pier, Clare
Dunmore East Councilors Beach, Wd	Maherbeg Beach, Kerry
Dunmore East, Lawlors Beach, Waterford	Inch Beach, Kerry
Tramore Strand, Waterford	Inch Beach, Kerry
Ballycuggeran Beach, Clare	Kells, Kerry

Bonmahon Beach, Waterford	Glencar Slip Way / Viewing Area, Leitrim
Hawks Cliff, Vico Baths, Kiliney, Dublin	River Nanny, Laytown, Meath
Bray Border, Wicklow	Spiddal Road Beach, Galway
Sandycove Beach, Dlr	Waterville Park Lake/Pond, Dublin
Ventry Beach, Kerry	Ladies Beach, Galway
River Lee, River Access Points, Cork	Palmers Beach, Galway
Bettystown, Meath	Blackrock Beach, Galway
River Flesk, Kerry	Magheramore Beach, Wicklow
Gulladoo Lake, Leitrim	Ballybunnion Beach North, Kerry
Eden Point (Lough Melvin), Leitrim	Ballybunnion Beach South, Kerry
Lough Erril Carpark, Leitrim	Rossbeigh Beach, Kerry
Acres Lake Playground (Acres Lake), Leitrim	Grattan Beach, Galway
Cormongan Pier (Lough Allen), Leitrim	Tra Saorphort (Mags Boreen), Galway
Behaval Lough, Leitrim	Silverstrand, Galway
Fowley Falls (Glenaniff River), Leitrim	Sandycove East Avenue, Dlr
Tullaghan Access To The Sea, Leitrim	Carlow To St Mullins, Carlow
Lough Mac Nean Upper, Leitrim	Inagh Village River Walk, Clare
Melvin Pier & View Point, Leitrim	Dromore Nr, Clare
Ballintra Sluice (Lough Allen), Leitrim	Ramor Lake, Cavan
Dromahaire Gaa (Bonet River), Leitrim	Williamstown Beach Dlr
Pol An East Waterfall (Bottom), Leitrim	Village Section River Slaney, Carlow
Pol An East Waterfall (Top), Leitrim	N80 Bridge To Barrow Carlow, Carlow
Glencar Slip Way / Viewing Area, Leitrim	Doughmore Beach, Clare

Lifeguard Rescues and Preventive Action

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.



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

County	Non-Fatal Drowning	Rescues without craft	Rescue Craft Rescues	First Aid	Lost Child Found	Advice Given	Accidents Prevented	Other incidents
Carlow	0	0	2	8	0	3,153	1	0
Cork	1	22	5	303	0	16,456	7,263	0
Clare	0	21	0	1,728	46	31,488	12,205	336
Donegal	0	2	4	134	6	22,543	6,924	657
Dublin	0	0	0	2	0	1,062	1,062	7
Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown	4	34	3	1,143	5	10,859	3,629	48
Fingal	0	54	12	322	55	3,716	755	124
Galway	0	24	0	235	6	5,713	773	100
Kerry	0	25	91	1,532	66	18,265	7,514	4,265
Kilkenny	0	3	0	8	0	1,284	55	3
Limerick Co.	0	2	0	39	0	85	110	29
Louth	0	0	0	105	2	108	0	0
Mayo	0	0	0	107	2	5,913	88	75
Meath	0	0	0	46	3	112	18	0
Roscommon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sligo	0	1	3	79	18	15,972	13,132	8,017
Tipperary	0	3	0	17	0	2,621	0	0
Waterford	2	5	0	334	36	6,006	2,586	13
Wexford	0	0	0	67	0	113	39	0
Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	196	120	6,209	245	146,469	56,154	13,674

Lifeguard Activity Returns	2025	2024
Non Fatal Drownings	7	22
Rescue	316	202
First Aid	6,209	5,129
Lost Child	245	152
Advice Given	145,469	121,558
Accident prevented	56,154	35,663
Other Incident	13,674	14,026



Lifesaving Sport

National Pool Championships 2025

- Total Participants: 783
- Junior Nipper: 210
- Senior Nipper, Youth, Open and Masters: 573
- International Athletes: 25

National Open Water Championships 2025

- Total Participants: 818
- Junior Nipper: 253
- Senior Nipper, Youth, Open and Masters: 565

National Championship Winners 2025

Overall Team Champions

- National Nipper Champions: Clare
- National Youth Champions: Wicklow
- National Open Champions: Cork Men A
- National Masters Champions: Waterford

Simulated Emergency Response Competition (SERC)

- Youth Champions: Cork
- Senior Champions: Belfast

European Lifesaving Championships 2025

Ireland delivered a strong performance at the European Lifesaving Championships in Szczecin and Międzyzdroje, Poland, achieving record-breaking results across both Pool and Ocean disciplines.

Team Results

- Youth Team: 8th Place
- Senior Team: 7th Place

Medal Summary

- 2 Gold Medals
- 4 Silver Medals
- 1 Bronze Medal

Irish Records

- 3 Irish Senior Records
- 3 Irish Youth Records

Discipline	Event	Athlete(s)	Record/Medal
Pool	100m Manikin Carry with Fins (Youth Girls)	Katie Cotter	1:00.20
Pool	100m Manikin Tow with Fins (Senior Women)	Leana Liddane	1:02.55
Pool	4 x 50m Obstacle Relay (Youth Boys)	Jamie Flynn, Jude Collins, Alan Vaughan, Stephen Bell	1:48.13
Pool	4 x 25m Manikin Carry Relay (Senior Women)	Aisling Barry, Elin Blake, Aoibh Blake, Leana Liddane	1:28.44
Beach	Sprint Relay (Youth Boys)	Alan Vaughan, Jamie Flynn, Andriy Kravchenko, Jude Collins	Gold
Beach	Board Rescue (Youth Girls)	Abby Cunningham, Isabelle Neville	Silver
Beach	Surf Race (Youth Girls)	Abby Cunningham	Bronze
Beach	Board Rescue (Senior Women)	Aisling Barry, Leana Liddane	Gold
Beach	Surf Race (Senior Women)	Leana Liddane	Silver
Beach	Ocean Woman (Senior Women)	Leana Liddane	Silver
Beach	Sprint Relay (Senior Women)	Aisling Barry, Leana Liddane, Ellie Martin, Susan Meehan	Silver

Additional International Achievement

- Irish Senior Record achieved at the Orange Cup 2025 in Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Discipline	Event	Athlete(s)	Record/Medal
Pool	4 x 50m Medley Relay (Senior Men)	Jamie Flynn, Oisín O'Grady, Cailim Van Dam, Alan Vaughan	1:33.23

National Squad Programme

- 35 athletes selected to the National Squad Programme
- 6 National Squad Camps delivered
- 3 National Team Camps delivered

Key Events

- National Trials
- GB Nationals
- M Series

M Series Winners 2025	Event
Senior Women	Leana Liddane
Senior Men	Oisín O'Grady
Youth Girls	Katie Cotter
Youth Boys	Alan Vaughan

- European Lifesaving Championships
- Orange Cup

Coaching & Officials Development

Coaching Education

- 3 Level 1 Coaching Courses delivered
- 31 new Level 1 Coaches qualified in 2025

Assistant Coach Education

- 3 Assistant Coach Courses delivered
- 36 Assistant Coaches qualified in 2025

Officials Development

- 2 Referee Courses delivered
- 18 National C Referees trained in 2025

International Appointments

- Clare McGrath appointed Chief Referee (Ocean) for the European Lifesaving Championships 2025
- Quentin Roche - Referee at European Lifesaving Championships 2025

National Championship Ranking

Category	Pool Championships	Open Water Championships
Senior Women	1. Clare A	1. Cork A
	2. Cork	2. Clare A
	3. Wicklow	3. Wicklow A
Senior Men	1. Cork A	1. Cork A
	2. Clare A	2. Clare A
	3. Cork B	3. Wicklow A
Youth Girls	1. Belfast	1. Wicklow
	2. Kilkenny	2. Cork
	3. Wicklow	3. Clare
Youth Boys	1. Clare	1. Clare
	2. Belfast	2. Waterford
	3. Waterford	3. Wicklow
Masters	1. Waterford	1. Sligo
	2. Cork	2. Waterford
	3. Kildare	3. Kildare
Nippers	1. Waterford	1. Clare
	2. Clare	2. Waterford
	3. Wicklow	3. Wicklow

National Awards Ceremony

Twenty-nine 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, O'Reilly Hall, UCD, Dublin, on Thursday, 21st October 2025.

The ceremony was attended by Jerry Buttimer T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht. 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.

The event celebrated the enduring dedication of **over 70 Water Safety Ireland volunteers**, who will receive **Long-Service Awards** for teaching swimming, water rescue, and survival skills – representing a combined **1,755** years of voluntary service. These volunteers have played a crucial role in teaching swimming, water rescue, and survival skills within communities across Ireland.



Photograph: David Branigan/Oceansport

L-R Clare McGrath - WSI Chair, Jack Anthony, Yvonne O'Donoghue, James Murphy and Jerry Buttimer - T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

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.

Roger McClure, Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club

During National Water Safety Awareness Week, Roger McClure of Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club took the lead in raising awareness around water safety and drowning prevention in his local community.

Through a series of educational sessions, on-the-water demonstrations, and community engagement initiatives, Roger and the club highlighted the importance of lifesaving skills, respect for water, and proper safety practices. His commitment to promoting water safety reflects the core values of Community and Social Responsibility, showing how local clubs and individuals can make a national impact through grassroots action. Thank you, Roger, for championing drowning prevention and ensuring that safety remains a priority on and off the water in Kilkenny and beyond.

Peter Driver

During World Drowning Prevention Week 2025, angling advocate Peter Driver used his platform to highlight the vital importance of water safety in the angling community. Through a powerful awareness video shared widely across social media, Peter delivered key messages on the risks faced by anglers near water and the simple steps that can save lives, from wearing lifejackets to understanding emergency response techniques. His efforts brought drowning prevention into focus for a new audience, demonstrating how every water-based sport has a role to play in safety education. Thank you, Peter, for using your voice and influence in the angling world to promote a culture of care, vigilance, and responsibility on our waterways.

Carlos Amay

As part of World Drowning Prevention Week 2025, surf instructor Carlos Amaya brought water safety to the waves by educating young surfers and beachgoers on the importance of respecting the ocean. Through interactive beach sessions and practical surf safety demonstrations, Carlos shared vital knowledge on rip currents, rescue techniques, and emergency response, helping to build confidence and awareness among new surfers and their families. His commitment to embedding lifesaving skills into surf culture embodies true community spirit. Thank you, Carlos, for making drowning prevention a natural part of every surf lesson and for helping to shape a safer generation of ocean users.

Peter Connolly, Bádóirí an Chladaigh

On World Drowning Prevention Day 2025, Peter Connolly of Bádóirí an Chladaigh honoured both the past and the future by sharing a powerful message about water safety and the deep maritime heritage passed down through generations of his family. Drawing on the traditional seafaring knowledge of the Claddagh community, Peter reminded us that water safety is not just a modern practice, but a timeless value rooted in respect for the sea. His reflections connected cultural heritage with contemporary lifesaving awareness, inspiring younger generations to carry forward the legacy of vigilance and care on the water. Thank you, Peter, for preserving the wisdom of the past while helping to protect lives today and into the future.

Madeline Shinnick & Michael Shinnick

On World Drowning Prevention Day 2025, the story of Madeline Shinnick and her grandson Michael served as a powerful reminder of how quickly a day at the beach can turn into a life-threatening situation. What began as a carefree afternoon became a moment of crisis when Michael found himself in danger in the water. Thanks to the quick thinking and actions of passerby Oisín Mcrath, a trained Lifesaver, Michael was rescued from drowning. Their experience underscores the unpredictability of open water and the importance of awareness, preparedness, and swift response. Thank you, Madeline and Michael, for sharing your story in promotional videos in order to help others understand just how vital water safety is for every family, on every shoreline.

Claddagh Watch

Throughout the year, Claddagh Watch Patrol exemplifies true community spirit and dedication to saving lives along Galway's waterways. Committed to preventing accidental drownings and providing support to those in distress, their volunteer teams patrol the Claddagh Basin and River Corrib late into the night, offering a visible presence of compassion, vigilance, and hope. Thank you to all the volunteers at Claddagh Watch for the lives you protect, the comfort you offer, and the awareness you raise throughout the year.

Wexford MarineWatch

Established in December 2012, the primary objective of Wexford Marinewatch was, and is to endeavour to reduce the high level of deaths by suicide in the Wexford Harbour area – which at the time the organisation was set up had begun to spiral out of control. All local Statutory & Voluntary Emergency Services joined forces to put this organisation in place – including An Garda Síochána, the National Ambulance Service, Wexford Fire Service with these agencies still playing an active role in supporting Wexford Marinewatch and its success to this day. This 'inter-agency' co-operation ensured a swift, co-ordinated response to someone in difficulty, ensuring deaths are kept to a minimum and the people get the help they need quickly. Today they have almost 100 active volunteers who patrol to keep the people of Wexford safe and well.

Limerick Treaty Suicide Prevention

Limerick Treaty Suicide Prevention continues to serve as a lifeline for the community, with volunteers patrolling the city's riverbanks to offer hope, support, and timely intervention to those in distress. Their presence along the River Shannon is a powerful reminder that drowning prevention and mental health support go hand in hand. Thank you to everyone at Limerick Treaty Suicide Prevention for your dedication, your courage, and the critical role you play in making Limerick a safer, more supportive place for all.

Limerick Suicide Watch

Limerick Suicide Watch stands as a steadfast presence along the River Shannon, working tirelessly year-round to prevent loss of life through compassionate intervention and community vigilance. Their volunteers patrol the city's bridges and waterways, offering support to those in crisis and ensuring that help is never far away. Thank you to everyone at Limerick Suicide Watch for your continued dedication, empathy, and bravery in protecting some of the most vulnerable members of your community.

Stelios Philanthropic Foundation

The Stelios Philanthropic Foundation continues to make a meaningful impact through its unwavering support of lifesaving initiatives and community wellbeing. Through its generous backing of education, training, and public awareness efforts, the Stelios Philanthropic Foundation is helping to create safer communities and save lives across Ireland and beyond. Thank you to the Foundation for your enduring support, generosity, and belief in the power of prevention.

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.

Roz Purcell

Roz Purcell has made a significant impact by using her platform to educate the public through an engaging online video series focused on staying safe in the water and how to spot dangerous rip currents. Her clear, accessible guidance empowers swimmers and beachgoers to recognise risks and take proactive steps to protect themselves and others. Roz's commitment to spreading life-saving knowledge far and wide is a vital contribution to water safety awareness. Thank you, Roz, for helping to make our waters safer through education, clarity, and care.

The SEIKO “Just In Time” Award

Thirty-nine lives were saved from drowning thanks to the courageous actions of rescuers who were honoured at Water Safety Ireland’s National Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, 21st October 2025.

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.

The event celebrated the enduring dedication of over 70 Water Safety Ireland volunteers, who received Long-Service Awards for teaching swimming, water rescue, and survival skills – representing a combined 1,755 years of voluntary 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.





Des Kenny Awards

The Des Kenny award is presented in national recognition to Water Safety Ireland members who perform Basic Life Support outside of their occupation or official voluntary activities.

1. Padraic Dolan, Laois - DES KENNY Award

Rescue Appreciation Award for the Group: Laois Marlins Swim Club

Coach: Andy Gunne Donagher. Lead Team Manager: Aisling Lalor, Team Manager: Enda Behan, Team Manager: Mathew Kelly, Chaperone: Aine MacNamara, Club Chairperson: Swimmers: Ewan Behan, Adam Brennan, Caoimhe Buckley, Aisling Condon, Ethan Davy, Amy Donagher, Holly Gunn, Louise Hartnett, Alex Hooney, Sophie Igoe, Kyle Kelly, Maeve Kelly, Issac Kenny, Aoibheann Lalor, Robert Roe, Ignat Samachov, Logan Smyth and Lena Zieman.

On the 21st of June 2025, at the Crol Centre in Calella, Barcelona, 14-year-old Logan was attending a swim training camp with his team, Laois Marlins Swim Club, when his teammates noticed he was in distress. Logan was gasping for breath and appeared to be in pain before suddenly slipping back under the water. His teammates promptly raised him up and pulled him over the edge of the pool with the help of Coaches Andy and Padraic. Recognising that Logan had no pulse, Padraic immediately began CPR and called for an AED.

Unfortunately, the AED was found to be defective, so Padraic continued CPR for approximately 12 minutes until paramedics arrived. With the aid of a functioning defibrillator, paramedics successfully revived Logan.

Logan was transferred to an ICU in Barcelona before being flown by air ambulance to the Children's Heart Centre in Crumlin. On the 8th of July, he underwent heart surgery and has since begun a new chapter in his life. He hopes to return to all sports, resume all activities, and reclaim his rightful place in the pool.

2. Hannah Wilson, Kildare - DES KENNY Award

On the 11th of July 2023, at the Paraiso Hotel in Albufeira, Portugal, Hannah noticed a crowd gathered at the deep end of the pool, pointing towards a man in distress. After the man was removed from the water, Hannah immediately left the pool and began performing CPR. She continued administering CPR for approximately 40 minutes until a paramedic arrived and took over.

Leon Quinlan Perpetual Award

Awarded to: Scoil Chríost Rí, Ennis, Co. Clare

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. Scoil Chríost Rí, located in Ennis, Co.Clare 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.



L-R Clare McGrath – WSI Chair, Staff and pupils of Scoil Chríost Rí and Jerry Buttimer – T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

Avery Greene Memorial Award

Awarded to: Treasure Island Playgroup, Renville, Co.Galway

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 Treasure Island Playgroup in Renville, Co. Galway, for their keen interest and enthusiasm in teaching the Hold Hands programme. Well done!



Sports Volunteer of The Year Award

Paddy Bond, Co. Donegal

Paddy Bond's involvement in Lifesaving Sport began as a teenager, competing for Donegal. He returned to the sport when his eldest son, Joseph, began competing. Since then, Paddy has been an integral part of the sport's growth, coaching within his local WSAC alongside his wife, Kate, and contributing to the development of Lifesaving Sport both in Donegal and across Ireland. Paddy's passion for coaching, both in the pool and on the beach, has seen him rise through the ranks to play a key role at national level. He served as Assistant Coach for the Irish National Team in 2022 and 2023, before taking on the position of Head Coach for the World Lifesaving Championships in Australia (2024) and the European Lifesaving Championships in Poland (2025).

Under his leadership, Irish athletes achieved remarkable results, securing two bronze medals in team events at Worlds and seven medals in total at Europeans, across both team and individual disciplines. Beyond international competition, Paddy has been instrumental in organising and leading National Squad Camps throughout the year, training the top 30 Open and Youth athletes in preparation for national trials and international events. His dedication to coach education is equally impressive- he has tutored both the Assistant Coaching Course and the Level 1 Coaching Course, sharing his extensive experience and technical expertise with new coaches. Respected for his leadership, commitment, and deep understanding of the sport, Paddy's influence reaches from the grassroots to the international stage. His tireless work, mentorship, and passion for developing athletes and coaches alike make him a truly deserving recipient of the Water Safety Ireland Sports Volunteer of the Year Award.

Female Sportsperson of the Year

Leana Liddane, Co. Clare

Leana Liddane, an exceptional athlete from Co. Clare, has firmly established herself as one of Ireland's premier lifesaving competitors. Representing Ireland on both the national and international stages, Leana's record-breaking performances have set new benchmarks in the sport. Her outstanding results at the European and National Championships highlight her dominance across a range of disciplines, from pool to ocean events. Competing against elite international athletes, Leana's determination and skill have consistently shone through. At the European Championships, she delivered 13 top-ten finishes in multiple events and earned several podium places, including 1 team gold medal, 2 individual silver medals and 1 team silver medal, whilst also breaking Irish records in the 100m Manikin Tow with Fins and 4x25m Manikin Carry Relay alongside her teammates. Domestically, she continued her winning streak at the National Championships, where she captured numerous gold medals, achieving victories in the 200m Obstacle Swim, 100m Manikin Tow with Fins, 100m Rescue Medley, and 200m Super Lifesaver, among others. Leana's success is the result of relentless dedication and intensive training, reflecting her deep commitment to lifesaving sport. Her achievements at home and abroad, combining multiple national titles, international medals, and record-setting performances, make her a truly deserving recipient of the Sports Person of the Year award.

Male Sportsperson of the Year

Jamie Flynn, Co. Waterford

Jamie Flynn has had a phenomenal year in lifesaving sport, distinguishing himself as one of Ireland's brightest young talents. Representing Ireland at the European Lifesaving Championships in Poland, Jamie delivered a series of exceptional performances across both pool and beach events. Competing against Europe's best, he demonstrated remarkable composure and competitiveness, progressing from heats into A and B finals and consistently placing close to the podium in several events individually and within teams. A highlight of Jamie's season came on the beach, where he was a key member of the Youth Boys team that won gold in the 4x90m Beach Sprint Relay, an outstanding achievement that showcased both his speed and teamwork under pressure. In the pool, Jamie and his teammates also broke the Irish Youth Record in the 4x50m Obstacle Relay, an incredible accomplishment that underscored their talent and precision. At national level, Jamie continued to impress across a broad range of events, achieving multiple podium finishes and consistently placing among the top competitors in both Youth and Senior Championships. His performances reflected a balance of strength, speed, and endurance, earning him recognition as a leading athlete in Irish lifesaving. Beyond his results, Jamie's commitment to training, respect for his coaches and teammates, and leadership within his squad have made him a role model both regionally and nationally. His record-breaking relay success, near-podium international finishes, and consistent national performances make him a thoroughly deserving recipient of the Sports Person of the Year Award.



Photograph: David Branigan/Oceansport

L-R Joanne Walsh - WSI CEO, Jamie Flynn and Jerry Buttimer - T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

Life Governor Award

Charlie Kennedy, Donegal

Charlie Kennedy's lifelong dedication to Water Safety Ireland spans over three decades of outstanding service, leadership, and education. As an Instructor, Examiner, Swim Tutor, Lifeguard Course Provider, Risk Assessor and International Referee, he has trained and mentored countless swimmers, lifesavers, and lifeguards nationwide. His qualifications and practical expertise have directly enhanced drowning prevention and aquatic safety across Ireland. In his capacity as a qualified Risk Assessor, Charlie has undertaken comprehensive safety evaluations of lakes, beaches, and surf schools, ensuring that these environments meet the highest safety standards and remain accessible to the public. His commitment to inclusion is particularly notable through his work in disability swimming and aquatic education, ensuring that people of all abilities can learn, participate, and thrive in water safety programmes.

Beyond teaching and assessment, Charlie has demonstrated exceptional dedication to lifesaving sport and the operational success of Water Safety Ireland. For more than twenty years, he has supported national and international competitions by transporting and setting up lifesaving equipment, enabling Irish athletes to compete effectively on the European stage. His leadership, generosity, and hands-on service have earned him deep respect among colleagues and communities alike. Through his professional excellence and family legacy of water safety engagement, Charlie has inspired new generations of instructors and lifesavers. His exemplary record of service embodies the values of Water Safety Ireland in education, inclusion, and community protection making him a most deserving recipient of the Life Governor Award.

Philip Keleghan, Kildare

Philip Keleghan's remarkable journey in water safety spans over five decades, distinguished by his unwavering commitment, expertise, and passion for aquatic safety and education. Born and raised in Finglas, Co. Dublin in 1960, Philip developed a love for the water early on, which led him to patrolling as a lifeguard on Donabate Beach and Balbriggan Beach, Co Dublin in 1977-78, building on his initial experience of learning to swim and water safety at the Finglas Corporation Pool, where in 1975, where he first volunteered to teach water safety.

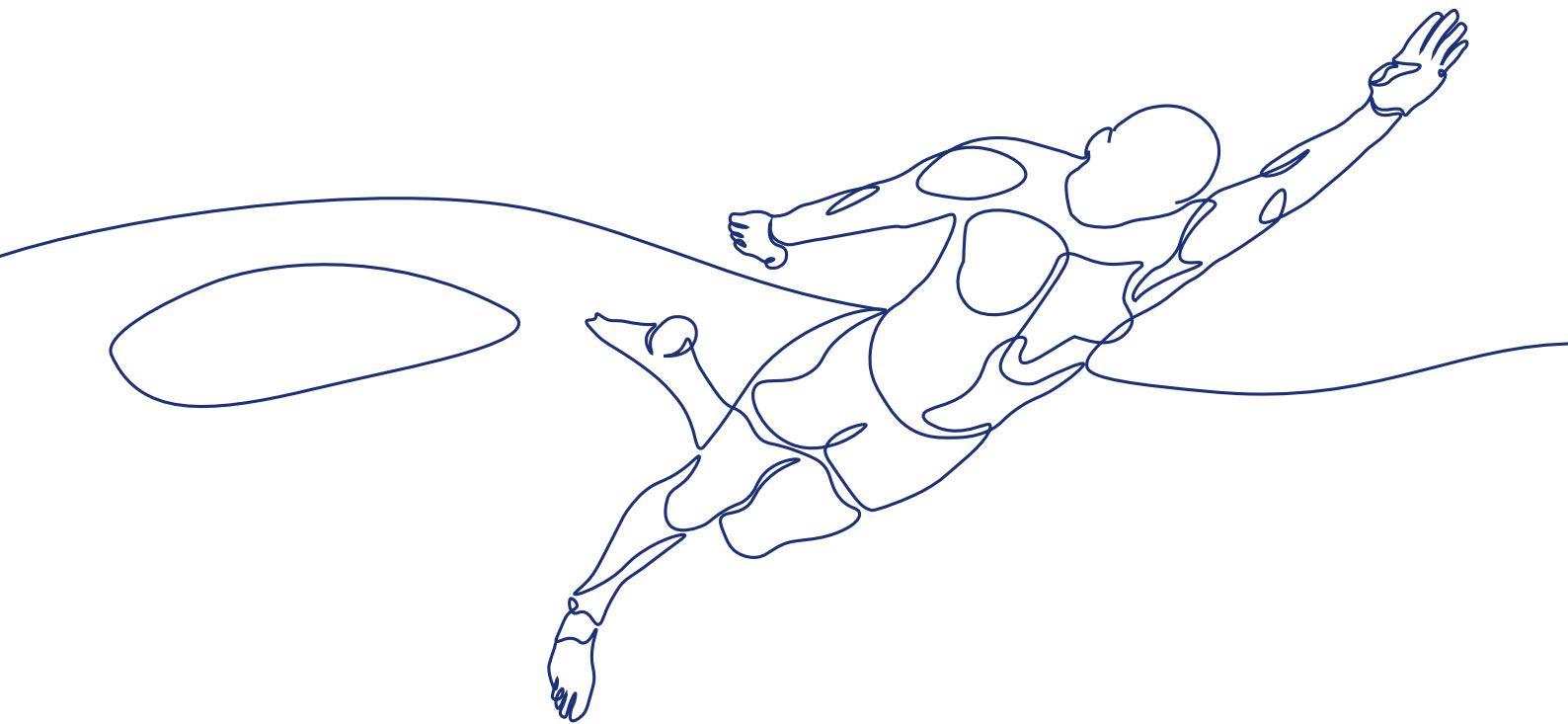
Philip's volunteering spirit shone through from the outset, qualifying as an instructor in 1977 and inspiring countless individuals ever since. His dedication to water safety education is evident in his long-standing service as an active Water Safety Instructor, Examiner, Pool & Beach Lifeguard Tutor, ILSE Risk Assessor, and Swimming Teacher and Tutor just to call a few achievements. Always eager to broaden his skills and deepen his knowledge, Philip completed his first boat training course in Tramore, Co. Waterford in 1980 and completed the ISA Power Boat instructor course in 2025. Philip continues to share his love of boating and best safety practices with the next generation, ensuring they have the knowledge to operate safely when boating.

An ardent competitor, Philip has represented both Kildare and Dublin counties at regional and national beach and pool competitions over the years both in Senior and Master competitions, achieving numerous medal placements and showcasing not only his skills but also his commitment to excellence.

Philip's leadership abilities were quickly recognised, leading him to serve as Vice Chair in Dublin in the early 1980s and later both Chairperson and Vice Chairperson in Kildare during the 1990s. To this day, Philip is a member of the WSI Kildare Committee, with over 25 years' service. Philip's influence within Water Safety Ireland is exemplary. Serving as an Instructor since 1975 and being appointed an Examiner since 1981, he has contributed extensively as a Risk Assessor, Swim Tutor, Swimming Teacher, Pool Lifeguard Tutor, Examiner, and Instructor. His passion for voluntary service continued unabated, and in 2017 he was recognised as WSI Volunteer of the Year for being at the forefront of water safety education and training, sharing his expertise and enthusiasm with the next generations.

From 2017 to 2025, Philip played a pivotal role as a board member of Water Safety Ireland, dedicating eight years to shaping policy, promoting safety, and fostering a culture of responsibility around water. From 2023 to 2025, he held the distinguished positions of Vice Chair of the Council of Water Safety Ireland and Chair of the WSI Technical Commission. Prior to this, he served as Chairperson of the Education Commission for five years, underscoring his reputation as a respected leader and visionary in the field. Philip's passion for education and his belief that it is never too early to start learning how to be safe around water lead to the creation of the WSI Hold Hands Water Safety programme for Early Learning and Care. Launched in 2021, this resource is now used in Early Learning and Care providers across the country. At the heart of the programme is a very simple idea. That children should always hold an adult's hand near water. By getting children to do this one thing, it will save lives. Philip continues to serve as member of WSI Audit commission.

Currently residing in County Wicklow, Philip is never far from the water—if not found locally at a water safety session in the K-Leisure pool in Naas, Co. Kildare, or at the WSI Kildare Training Centre at Blessington Lakes, Co. Wicklow, he's likely to be off the coast of Cork, immersed in the aquatic environment he so dearly loves. His educational endeavours, marked by a hands-on approach and genuine care for every individual, have left an indelible mark on all who have had the privilege to learn from him. Philip Keleghan's legacy is one of inspiration, dedication, and achievement. His lifelong service to water safety continues to make Ireland's aquatic environment safer for all, and his impact will be felt for generations to come.



Long Service Awards

Long Service Awards are presented in recognition of a voluntary commitment to promoting a public awareness of water safety and rescue based on the humanitarian goal of saving life.

Water Safety Ireland extends a sincere debt of gratitude to the following volunteers.

10 YEARS CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE	
NAME	COUNTY
Mikaela O'Halloran	Offaly
Nuala Moroney	Westmeath
Niall Fallon	Westmeath
Marlene Mitchell	Wicklow
Mhairi Nicoll	Wicklow
Eoin O'Driscoll	Cork
Síle Ní Chonghaile	Galway
Aisling O'Hara	Cavan
Rachael Mulqueen	Limerick
Brian Crean	Banna CRBI
Tom Douglas	Dublin

15 YEAR SERVICE MEDAL OF HONOUR	
NAME	COUNTY
Marie-Clare Daly	Galway
Niall Fallon	Westmeath
Enda Hanniffy	Westmeath
Katie Sexton	Wicklow
Claire Morton	Wicklow
Aidan Malone	Kildare
Gráinne Phelan	Limerick
David O'Mahony	Derrynane
Gráinne Costello	Banna CRBI
Colleen Trant	Banna CRBI
Mike Ashe	Banna CRBI
Clodagh Mockler Kelly	Dublin

20 YEAR SERVICE MEDAL OF HONOUR	
NAME	COUNTY
Morgan Fagg	Westmeath
Colm Salmon	Westmeath
Linda Farrell	Wicklow
Anne Curtin	Cork
Seán O'Keefe	Cork

30 YEARS OF SERVICE SILVER BAR	
NAME	COUNTY
Ciara O'Sullivan	Limerick
Desmond O'Shea	Derrynane CRBI
Jerry Clifford	Derrynane CRBI
John O'Shea	Derrynane CRBI
Michael Donnelly	Derrynane CRBI
Robert Carroll	Derrynane CRBI
Patrick Carroll	Derrynane CRBI
David Boland	Derrynane CRBI
David Hare	Derrynane CRBI
Caroline Donnelly	Derrynane CRBI
Helen Wilson	Derrynane CRBI
Brian O'Sullivan	Derrynane CRBI
Michael Fenton	Derrynane CRBI
Jackie Roche	Dublin
Julie-Ann O'Donovan	Cork
Susan Vaughan	Wexford

40 YEARS OF SERVICE GOLD BAR	
NAME	COUNTY
John Kearney	Galway
Brian Fagg	Westmeath
Marie Farrell	Wicklow
Helena Duggan	Wexford
Paul Burke	Cork
John Kearney	Galway
Ita Richardson	Limerick
Tom Kavanagh	Galway
Catherine Fleming	Dublin
Kevin McCloskey	Donegal
Joan Morton	Wicklow

50 YEARS GOLD SERVICE MEDAL OF HONOUR	
NAME	COUNTY
Gerry Flannery	Westmeath
Margaret Bell	Limerick
Paul Devins	Dublin

Volunteer of the Year Award

Recipient: Morgan Fagg, Westmeath

The Volunteer of the Year Award is designed to recognise and honour an outstanding volunteer within Water Safety Ireland whose contributions have gone above and beyond. This year, we are delighted to bestow this honour upon Morgan Fagg, Chairperson of Westmeath Water Safety.

For Morgan, water safety runs in the family, being instilled in him by his father Brian, who is also a member, and now passing this passion on to his son. Morgan joined Water Safety Ireland 20 years ago and since then, has been active in his community raising awareness about the hazards of the water and networking with other clubs to get the messaging out in a collaborative way, helping to reach a broader audience. Morgan takes initiatives on things like "Going Blue" for World Drowning Prevention Day, working with city officials to light up Athlone in awareness. Morgan is both the Chairperson and Public Relations Officer of Westmeath Water Safety, as well as serving on the Marketing commission. His love of photography comes in handy for these roles, and Morgan is always offering his time and photography skills to different WSI events. He has continued to show his dedication by showing up to marches, tabling events, conferences, quarterly meetings and Volunteer Manager meetings, where his advice and ideas are always welcome and appreciated. Morgan continues to work hard to grow the Westmeath committee and we are grateful for his enthusiasm, his dedication and his service.



L-R Clare McGrath – WSI Chair, Morgan Fagg – WSI Westmeath Chair, Jerry Buttimer – T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht and Joanne Walsh – WSI CEO

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

Kindly sponsored by SEIKO, these awards recognise courageous rescue interventions to assist persons in immediate danger in the water. Congratulations to all 26 rescuers for helping to save 29 lives in the following 23 incidents.

1. Oisín McGrath, Clare - Just In Time

On the 28th of April 2025, at the Lahinch slipway, a group of children were playing on the slipway, they were running in and out from the waves. One of the young children had lost his footing and was swiftly carried by the swell back down the slipway and out into the sea. Conditions were treacherous, there was a large surge. Oisín observed the incident and immediately ran towards the slipway. He entered the water and managed to grab hold of the boy. With the help of a member of the public Oisín managed to pull the boy out to safety.

2. Larry Bolger, Carlow - Just In Time

On the 18th of May 2025, at the River Barrow, Larry was with his family when he noticed a group swimming across the weir. One swimmer suddenly got a cramp and began shouting for help. Larry quickly ran to get a lifebuoy, then swam out to the distressed man. He managed to reach and help him to grab hold of the lifebuoy. He then towed him safely back to shore.

3. Jonathan Heffernan, Kerry - Just In Time

On the 21st of September 2024, at the Marina in Tralee, Jonathan was in his apartment when he noticed a young child near the water. He promptly alerted emergency services. When the child entered the water and began to submerge, Jonathan rushed outside to the water's edge but saw the child was out of reach. Without hesitation, he jumped into the water and swam a short distance to rescue the child. He successfully brought the child to safety, and the Gardai transported the child to the hospital, where a full recovery was made.

4. Annette O Sullivan, Cork - Just In Time

Kevin Wilson, Cork - Rescue Appreciation

On the afternoon of the 20th of August 2023, at Kinsale Dock Beach, Annette was swimming with other regular swimmers. She had exchanged pleasantries with a fellow swimmer and continued her swim. After some time, Annette noticed a woman waving weakly in her direction and quickly realised she was in trouble. Annette swam over and found the woman disoriented. She reassured her and instructed her to hold onto the rope attached to her tow float, then began towing her toward shore. After about 100 yards, Annette heard a noise and paused to check on the woman, offering further reassurance before calling for help. Deciding to continue, Annette held the woman by the straps of her swimsuit and swam toward the shore, a journey that took around 20 minutes. During this time, Annette spotted a man named Kevin on the cliff, who quickly recognised that both women were in distress. As the woman began to lose consciousness, Kevin ran down to the beach and alerted another man. Together with Annette, they helped bring the woman safely to shore. Both women were then towed to safety by the swimmers. The RNLI arrived promptly and took over the situation. The woman was taken to hospital and made a full recovery.

5. Keith McDonagh, Clare - Just In Time

Ken O Connell, Clare - Rescue Appreciation

Conor Deloughery, Clare - Rescue Appreciation

Tommy O Sullivan, Clare - Rescue Appreciation

On the 8th of August 2025, at the east end of Kilkee Cliffs, Keith, an off-duty paramedic, noticed a man in distress in the water. He promptly contacted the local voluntary group, Kilkee CFR, to inform them of his plan and requested that they alert the Coast Guard and emergency services. Keith then entered the water with a lifebuoy and swam several hundred meters out to sea. He managed to reach the man and threw the lifebuoy, which the man grasped despite slipping in and out of consciousness. To tow him to safety, Keith swam underneath the man, pulling him backward while carefully avoiding the cliffs and moving toward the deeper, safer middle of the bay, where he waited for assistance. Two jet skis soon arrived at the scene—one carrying Ken O'Connell and Conor Deloughery, and the other piloted by Tommy O'Sullivan. Together, they transferred the man onto the back of a jet ski. Ken and Keith lifted the casualty onto the craft, after which Conor boarded the Coast Guard rescue boat. Ken then transported Keith and the casualty to the Kilkee pier, where emergency services took over. The man made a full recovery.

6. Caoimhe Moroney, Clare - Just In Time

Noelle O Donoghue, Offaly - Rescue Appreciation

On the 11th of July 2025, at Bishops Quarter, Ballyvaughan, fifteen-year-old Caoimhe, a member of the Clare Surf Life Team, was at the beach with her family when she heard cries for help from the water. She quickly grabbed her board and paddled out to assist a man in distress. While Caoimhe was performing the rescue, her family alerted the lifeguard stationed further up the beach. Noelle, a relative, also entered the water with a lifebuoy, ready to provide additional support if needed. All three returned safely to shore.

7. Jack Anthony, Cork - Just In Time**James Murphy, Cork - Just In Time****Yvonne O Donoghue, Cork - Rescued**

On the 1st of May 2025, at Garretstown, Yvonne went for a swim and unfortunately got caught up in the currents and swept out. Her husband who remained on the shore ran to Jack who had a surfboard. Jack immediately entered the water with his surfboard and made his way out to Yvonne. Yvonne held onto the surfboard. Meanwhile, James was made aware of the situation, and he immediately entered the water with the lifebuoy. He swam out towards Yvonne and Jack and proceeded to throw the lifebuoy onto the surfboard. They grabbed hold of the lifebuoy and James managed to tow both back to safety.

8. Ella Kingston, Cork - Just In Time**Maya McMahon, Cork - Just In Time****Conor Uhl, Cork, Cork - Just In Time****Lyle Hatchett, Cork - Just In Time****Peter Moynihan, Cork - Just In Time**

On the 1st of May 2025, at Inchydoney Beach, Ella became aware of six teenage boys in difficulty in the water due to a rip current. She immediately ran down the beach with her friend Maya and entered the water with a lifebuoy to assist. While swimming toward the teenagers, they noticed that a couple who had attempted to help the boys had also gotten into difficulty. Ella and Maya diverted their course to assist the couple, providing them with two lifebuoys to help them stay afloat. At the same time, three surfers, Conor, Lyle, and Peter entered the water with their boards. The swimmers in distress were spread out, so the surfers quickly coordinated their efforts. Conor paddled toward the three swimmers furthest from shore, while Peter and Lyle headed toward a single swimmer and the two adults. Conor reached the three boys and calmly instructed them on how to escape the rip current, then guided them slowly back to safety. After ensuring their safety, he returned to assist Peter and Lyle, who had successfully brought the other swimmers onto their boards. Meanwhile, Ella and Maya safely swam back to shore. Thanks to the swift, coordinated efforts of all involved, everyone was safely rescued.

9. William Muprhy, Kerry - Just In Time**Katherine Fitzgerald - Rescue Appreciation****Mick Tuffrey - Rescue Appreciation****Brendan Spillane - Rescue Appreciation****David O Connor - Rescue Appreciation**

On the morning of the 7th of October 2021, at Brandon Pier, a woman was swept out to sea by a strong current while taking her daily swim. Friends on shore quickly raised the alarm. William, who was working nearby, was alerted to the situation and immediately responded with a colleague. He obtained a surfboard and ropes, while others gathered two lifebuoys. Katherine contacted emergency services. William entered the water and reached the woman, who had managed to cling to a mooring buoy in the bay. He secured her onto the surfboard, and with the assistance of Brendan, David, and Mick who pulled the board to shore using ropes, they successfully brought her to safety. Emergency services arrived shortly thereafter and took over care. The woman made a full recovery.

10. Florin Caraene, Cavan - Just In Time

Roseann Malone - Rescue Appreciation

On the 11th of August 2025, at Ramor Lake, Virginia, a teenage boy got into difficulty approximately 20 metres from the shore. Florin, who was at the lake with his family, noticed the boy struggling in the deep water. Without hesitation, Florin entered the water fully clothed and swam out to assist. Using a ring buoy, he successfully towed the boy back to shore. An off-duty nurse placed the boy in the recovery position and remained with him until emergency services arrived and took over care. The boy subsequently made a full recovery.

11. Ciaran Mulroe (13), Donegal - Just In Time

Sean Mulroe (Father) - Rescue Appreciation

On the 7th of September 2024, at Marble Hill, Ciaran and his father, Sean, were out kayaking when they spotted a man in distress, clinging to a rock in the water. They immediately paddled over to assist. After reassuring the man, they persuaded him to hold onto Ciaran's kayak. Ciaran then safely towed him back to shore. The man was subsequently taken to hospital, where he made a full recovery.

12. Joseph Magill, Dublin - Rescue Appreciation

On the 20th of November 2024, at Sandymount Strand, Joseph was working in the area when he noticed a man stranded on a sandbank, unaware that the tide was rapidly rising around him. Acting quickly, Joseph equipped himself with waders and a life jacket and brought an additional set for the man. He made his way toward the individual, calmly assisted him in putting on the safety gear and provided reassurance throughout the process. Joseph then held onto the man's arm and safely guided him back to shore.

13. Sarah Martin, Dublin - Just In Time

On the 9th of July 2025, at Rosscarbery Pier, Sarah observed a father and his eight-year-old daughter in difficulty in the water. The pair had entered the water together, but the child became distressed by the cold and clung to her father, who was visibly struggling to keep them both afloat. Recognising the urgency of the situation, Sarah immediately entered the water to assist. She calmly reassured the young girl and safely guided her to the pier steps. Once the child was secure, Sarah returned to check on the father. After taking a moment to recover, he was able to swim to safety on his own.

14. Pete Mason, Donegal - Just In Time

On the 18th of August 2025, at Port na Blagh, Pete was at the pier with his family when he observed a teenage boy in visible distress in the water. Recognising the urgency of the situation, Pete immediately entered the water and successfully managed to reach the boy, who was struggling to stay afloat. Placing his arm securely underneath the youth to provide support, Pete managed to tow him through the water back to the pier. Thanks to his swift and decisive actions, the boy was brought safely to shore.

15. Thomas Shevlane (then 16), Westmeath - Just In Time

Thomas Devlin (then 16) - Rescue Appreciation

On the 26th of June 2017, at The Quay in Athlone, Thomas was walking along the riverbank after fishing with friends when he witnessed a man stumble and fall into the water. The individual struck his head against a boat during the fall and became unconscious.

Without hesitation, Thomas entered the water and swam to the man in distress. He placed his arm around him and managed to bring him to a nearby boat that had a ladder attached. Using the ladder for support, Thomas positioned the man's head on one of the rungs to keep it above water and held him securely until help arrived. Meanwhile, Thomas's cousin, Thomas Devlin, had contacted emergency services and remained at the scene to reassure him that assistance was on the way. Emergency responders arrived shortly thereafter and took over. The man was safely recovered and went on to make a full recovery.

16. Mohammed Khatiri, Cork - Just In Time

On the 6th of August 2025, at Parliament Bridge, Mohammed observed from his window a young girl fall into the water. He immediately ran to the scene and entered the cold, deep river. The girl was found clinging to the river wall, struggling to stay afloat. With the assistance of a ring buoy thrown to him by a passerby, Mohammed secured a firm grip beneath her shoulders and successfully pulled her to safety. Thanks to his prompt and courageous actions, the girl made a full recovery.

17. Igor Burkun, Donegal - Just In Time

Sinead Boyle - Rescue Appreciation

On the 15th of November 2024, in Annagry, Igor Burkun was waiting in a car park for his son's school bus when he noticed a toddler walking around a van at the edge of a garden. He then saw the child heading towards a fence near a body of water. After losing sight of the boy for a few moments, Igor went to investigate and discovered the child face down, floating in the water. The water was murky and calm, with reeds growing along the edge. Without hesitation, Igor entered the water. Although he struggled initially, he managed to pull the boy out and bring him to safety. The boy was unresponsive and blue in colour, prompting Igor to perform an infant resuscitation technique like the Heimlich manoeuvre—a procedure he had recently seen demonstrated on social media. The boy regained consciousness.

At this point, Igor was on the roadside when Sinéad Boyle stopped to assist. Thankfully, she was medically trained and took over care. Emergency services were contacted, and upon arrival, paramedics took over treatment. The boy subsequently made a full recovery.

18. Samuel Buick, Sligo - Just In Time

On the 7th of August 2024, at Enniscrone Beach, Samuel became aware of a person in distress in the water. A father and his daughter had been swimming when they suddenly realised, they were out of their depth and caught in a strong current. The daughter managed to swim back near the shore and was assisted out of the water by another individual.

Samuel quickly took a board from a nearby student and paddled out to rescue the man. Despite poor visibility and waves approximately three feet high, he searched urgently. Hearing a cry to his right, he located the man in distress, helped him onto the board, and paddled him safely back to shore. The man was transported to hospital and made a full recovery.

19. Kuba Dmowski - Rescue Appreciation

Sean Holden & Tiernan Codd Wexford - Rescue Appreciation

On the 9th of July 2025, Kuba Dmowski (13), Sean Holden (12) and Tiernan Codd (13) were fishing at Rosslare harbour, when they noticed a group of young swimmers heading into a dangerous area. They called out to them not to swim out too far because there was a really strong current there. Eventually, they noticed that the swimmers were being taken out to sea.

They saw the danger signs and showed no hesitation in calling 112. A short time later, emergency services arrived at the scene and managed to bring the young swimmers to safety.

They made a full recovery.

20. Maitiu Clerkin - Just In Time

Joe Herron - Just In Time

Turlagh Mc Daid - Just In Time

Dualta Bracken - Just In Time

On August 15th, 2025, at Tramore Beach in Donegal, a family was enjoying a day out by the sea. Two children had gone for a swim when they were suddenly swept out by a strong current. One of the children's father entered the water in an attempt to reach them, but the further he went, the stronger the current became, pulling him out to deeper water. Eventually, he found himself out of his depth and struggling against the powerful waves. Meanwhile, both children were crying out for help. Maitiu, Joe, Turlagh, and Dualta noticed the unfolding emergency and quickly responded. Using two surfboards, they paddled out towards the trio in distress. Thanks to their swift and courageous actions, all four rescuers managed to bring the father and two children safely back to shore. All three casualties made a full recovery.

WSI Lifesaving Bravery Award

1. Gardai Cathal Daly, Westmeath

Dylan Dunleavy, Westmeath

On March 1st, 2025, Gardai Daly and Dunleavy were alerted to a male in distress in the River Shannon near Burgess Park. Both Gardai entered the water and successfully rescued the man, bringing him to safety. The male subsequently made a full recovery.

2. Garda Sheamus Barry, Dublin

On the 31st of May 2024, Garda Barry was alerted to a female in distress in the River Liffey near Ormonde Quay. Upon arrival, he observed that a member of the public had entered the water in an attempt to assist the female, but both were beginning to struggle. Garda Barry climbed down the outer barrier and jumped into the river. Despite the strong current, he managed to reach the female and support her in the water. He also assisted the member of the public by propping him up and helping him stay afloat. After some time, Dublin Fire Brigade arrived and deployed a RIB rescue boat, successfully bringing both the member of the public and the female to safety. Garda Barry then swam safely to the riverbank.

3. Garda Paula Coen, Galway

Garda Claire Grenham, Galway

Garda Daithi, Galway

On the 8th of May 2025, at Loughrea Lake, Gardai Paula Coen and Daithi Galway were alerted to a female in distress in the water. Upon arrival at the scene, they promptly secured a lifebuoy and entered the water to assist. Despite challenging conditions, they successfully reached the woman and brought her safely to shore. Garda Claire Grenham then provided immediate care, ensuring the woman remained warm and calm while awaiting the arrival of paramedics. The woman was subsequently transported to hospital and made a full recovery.

4. Ian Power, Cork

Donal Keane Sheldon, Kirkwood

On May 20th, 2025, at Hauwboline, Ringaskiddy, two individuals were thrown from a jet ski approximately 40 metres from the slipway. The situation quickly escalated as both individuals became visibly distressed in the water. Sheldon immediately ran to the National Maritime College pontoon and began preparing the Fast Rescue Craft. His colleague, Donal, also responded promptly to the commotion. Meanwhile, the unmanned jet ski remained powered on and was moving erratically toward the Naval Base wall, posing an additional hazard. The rescue craft was launched without delay, and Sheldon and Donal successfully reached the first individual, bringing him safely aboard. Sheldon then radioed Ian, who was operating a separate vessel nearby, to assist with recovering the second person. Ian reached the individual, removed him from the water, and safely transported him to the slipway. Ian's quick response enabled Sheldon and Donal to focus their efforts on safely intercepting and securing the unmanned jet ski. Both individuals rescued from the water were assessed and went on to make a full recovery.

5. Garda Megan Haugh, Clare Garda Andrew McGhee

On November 22nd, 2024, at the River Fergus in Ennis, Gardaí Megan Haugh and Andrew McGhee were alerted to a woman in distress in the water. Upon arrival at the scene, Garda McGhee entered the river and waded through the cold waters to reach the woman. He was able to guide her into a standing position and assist her toward the embankment steps. At that point, Garda Haugh provided further assistance by helping to bring the woman out of the water and wrapping her in shock blankets to prevent hypothermia. The woman was subsequently transported to hospital, where she made a full recovery.

6. Gardai Brian Culbert, Clare Christopher Whyte Grace O'Halloran

On June 13th, 2023, at Spanish Point Beach, Gardaí Culbert, Whyte, and O'Halloran were alerted to two young girls in difficulty in the water. The Coast Guard and ambulance services were immediately placed on standby as the situation developed. All three Gardaí entered the water upon observing that one of the girls had submerged and was no longer visible. They successfully located and brought her back to shore, where she was found to be unconscious. The Gardaí promptly administered first aid on the beach. They then re-entered the water and successfully rescued the second girl, who had been in the cold water for a significant amount of time and was showing clear signs of hypothermia. She was carried up the beach to safety. Gardaí remained with both individuals, continuing to aid until ambulance personnel arrived on scene. Both girls were transported to hospital and went on to make a full recovery.

7. Gardai Conor Craig, Louth Kevin Memery

On March 1st, 2025, at Charleville, Dunleer, Gardaí were alerted to a male in distress in the Droomgoolestown area. Upon arrival at the scene, Garda Craig located the individual and immediately informed his colleagues of the situation. The man was trapped in a swampy section of a tillage field and was sinking rapidly. Both Gardaí acted swiftly, leaning over the edge of the swamp area to reach the man and successfully pulled him to safety. The male was showing signs of potential hypothermia due to prolonged exposure to cold water. An ambulance arrived shortly thereafter, and the man was transported to hospital, where he went on to make a full recovery.

8. Garda Colin Mallick, Carlow Sergeant Paul O'Shea

On the 12th of July 2025, at the River Barrow, Garda Mallick and Sergeant O'Shea responded to an incident involving a male who had gotten into difficulty in the water. Upon assessing the situation, both members quickly located and deployed a lifebuoy in an attempt to assist the man. Recognising the urgency and the continued risk to the individual, both Garda Mallick and Sergeant O'Shea entered the water and made their way toward him. They successfully reached the man and, working together, brought him safely to the riverbank. Emergency medical services arrived shortly thereafter and took over. The man subsequently made a full recovery.

9. Gardai Stephen O'Shea, Wicklow

Keith Keating

On July 17th, 2025, at the River Vartry in Wicklow Town, Gardaí O'Shea and Keating became aware of a man in difficulty in the water. The individual had become trapped by thick vegetation and overgrown trees. Both Gardaí entered the river from the opposite bank and swam toward the man, despite very poor visibility. They successfully reached him and managed to bring him to safety.

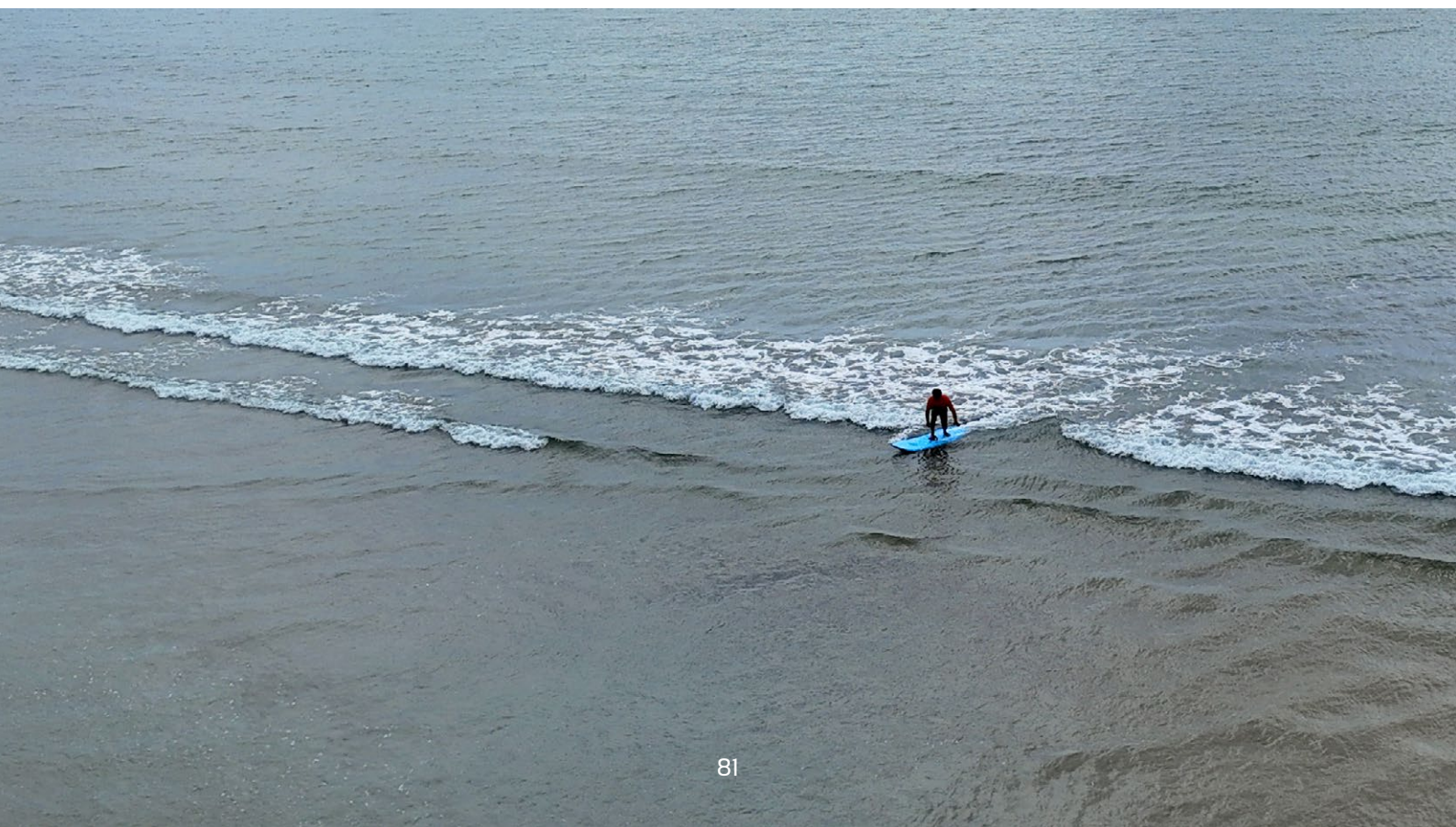
10. Gardai Eoin McCabe, Clare

On July 21st, 2025, Garda McCabe was on patrol in the Ennis town area when he became aware of a woman in distress in the River Fergus. Upon arriving at the scene, Garda McCabe located the woman and immediately entered the river. He successfully reached her and brought her back toward safety. Other members of the Gardaí assisted by pulling both the woman and Garda McCabe from the river onto the walkway. The woman went on to make a full recovery.

11. Garda Shane Riddell, Galway

Garda Randal Considine

On September 19th, 2024, at Dunguaire West, Kinvara, Gardaí were alerted to a man in difficulty in the sea near Dunguaire Castle. Upon arrival, both Gardaí observed a man partially submerged in the water, with only his head visible above the surface. Garda Riddell quickly retrieved a nearby lifebuoy, while Garda Considine made his way along the shore toward the man. Garda Considine entered the water and swam approximately 20 metres to reach the individual. On arrival, he submerged himself to free the man's foot, which was trapped underwater. By this time, the tide had risen considerably. Garda Considine successfully assisted the man back to shore, where Garda Riddell and members of the fire brigade helped bring him up onto the roadway. Paramedics took over upon arrival, and the man went on to make a full recovery.





Media Appreciation Awards

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

National TV Broadcaster: Laura Fletcher RTE News

We would like to acknowledge Laura Fletcher, RTÉ News, for her outstanding contribution to promoting water safety through responsible journalism. Her commitment to public interest reporting has helped amplify vital water safety messages, encouraging behavioural change and increasing awareness nationwide. By engaging with Water Safety Ireland and highlighting key safety issues in her coverage, Laura has played a valuable role in informing and protecting communities across Ireland.

National Press Award: Sylvia Thompson, Irish Times

Water Safety Ireland recognises Sylvia Thompson of The Irish Times for her impactful journalism highlighting the often-overlooked dangers associated with swimming and rip currents. Through compelling storytelling and expert insight, Sylvia brought national attention to the risks faced by swimmers and the importance of informed, responsible behaviour around water. Her work plays a vital role in supporting public education, helping to shift attitudes and encourage safer practices along Ireland's coastlines and inland waterways.

Regional Press Award: Lynda Kiernan, Leinster Express

Water Safety Ireland is pleased to recognise Lynda Kiernan of the Leinster Express for her outstanding local reporting on water safety. Her article highlighting a simple yet powerful tip for swimmers and dippers in Laois – to always know your location and never go alone – brought critical safety guidance directly to community readers. Through clear, grounded writing and a focus on real-life local contexts, Lynda's work helps change attitudes and protects lives right where it matters most.

National Radio Broadcaster: Mary Wilson, Morning Ireland

Water Safety Ireland is proud to commend Mary Wilson (Morning Ireland) for her sensitive and impactful coverage of the theft and vandalism of ring-buoys. Through her platform, she brought public attention to a serious issue that can put lives at risk – reminding listeners that lifesaving equipment is not to be tampered with, removed, or vandalised. Mary's thoughtful reporting helps reinforce the message that these devices are lifelines, not fixtures, and supports our ongoing work to protect public safety around Ireland's waters.

Local Radio Station Award: Bronagh Gately, South East Radio

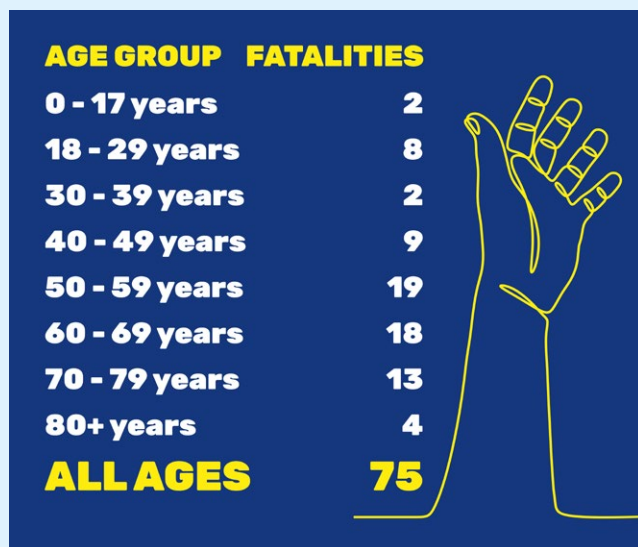
Water Safety Ireland is pleased to recognise Bronagh Gately of South East Radio for her dedicated coverage of water safety during National Water Safety Awareness Week. Through her reporting, Bronagh effectively communicated vital safety messages to the Wexford community, highlighting the importance of caution and preparedness around water. Her work has contributed significantly to raising awareness and promoting safer practices among the public.

Analysis of Drownings 2025

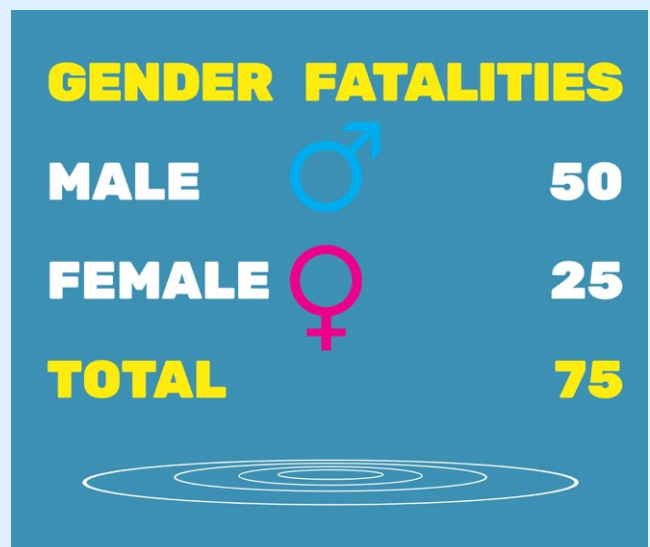
Water Safety Ireland - targeting at-risk groups with drowning prevention initiatives.

This information is collated from the Irish Coast Guard, An Garda Síochána, Coroners, and media reports. It is updated as new reports is provisional, and is subject to change.

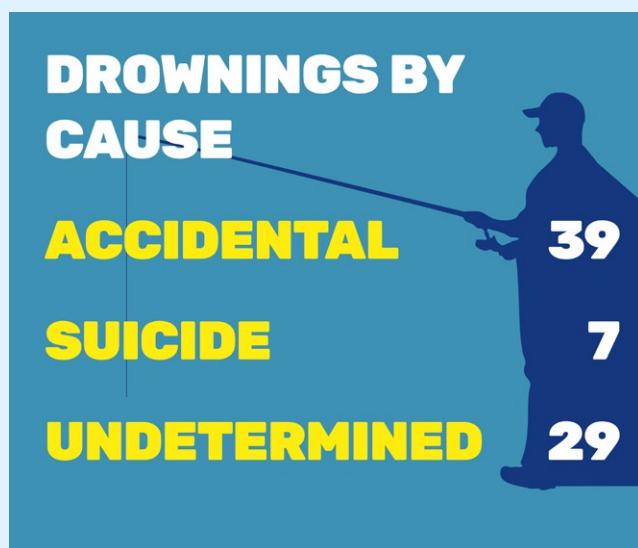
Drownings by Age 2025



Drownings by Gender 2025



Drownings by Cause 2025



Drownings by County 2025



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 and the Gaeltacht to ensure these requirements are met and accurately reported.



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