



# Australian Water Safety Conference 2012

From Strategy to Action

MONDAY 4 AND TUESDAY 5 JUNE 2012  
Novotel Hotel Brighton Beach  
Cnr. The Grand Parade & Princess Street, Brighton-le-Sands NSW  
[www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au)

**CALL FOR ABSTRACTS AND EARLY REGISTRATION**



# Australian Water Safety Conference 2012

## From Strategy to Action

---

The Australian Water Safety Council announces the AUSTRALIAN WATER SAFETY CONFERENCE 2012 - FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION, to be held at the Novotel Hotel Brighton Beach on Monday 4 and Tuesday 5 June 2012.

The conference provides a forum for those working in water safety and drowning prevention to share valuable water safety information, best practice and research.

'Reducing drowning deaths by 50% by 2020' the draft Australian Water Safety Strategy for 2012-2015 will be released at the conference. The draft strategy will be presented and discussed, with the opportunity for delegates to provide feedback for implementation over the coming period.

### Background – Australian Water Safety Council

The Australian Water Safety Council (AWSC) is committed to improving Water Safety in Australia as demonstrated through the implementation and production of the National Water Safety Plans. These plans have generated bipartisan support for Water Safety in Australia and have seen the improvement of Water Safety throughout the country.

This is the seventh Water Safety Conference undertaken by the AWSC. All conferences have involved a broad cross-section of the Australian Water Safety Community. The conference proceedings and AWSC Plans/Strategy documents can be downloaded from the AWSC website at [www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au)



---

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

- Policy Makers
- State Water Safety Council Members
- Managers of Aquatic Venues
- Researchers
- Water Safety Organisations
- Health Promotion Professionals
- Volunteer Lifesavers
- Lifeguards
- Swimming and Water Safety Instructors
- Rescue and Emergency Services Personnel
- Disaster Reduction Professionals



## Home Pool Fencing Legislation: Queensland Case Study / Implementation

The water safety community has advocated for national consistency in home swimming pool fencing legislation as a means of reducing drowning deaths, particularly within the under 5 years age group. Pool barriers are mandatory in all areas of Australia and uniform standards apply for construction of new barriers. However, the regulation of home pool fencing varies within and between jurisdictions.

National consistency in legislation has been argued as being a means of improving the likelihood of compliance with legislation.

There has been a significant reduction in drowning deaths in home swimming pools in Queensland this past year, where the Government announced significant reform to the legislation in 2010. It is clear that the message is starting to get through with mandatory inspections, increased public awareness and a register of pools.

## Drowning and Disasters: Preparedness, Response and Recovery

Disasters, particularly natural disasters such as flooding, storm surges and Tsunamis affect millions of people globally every year. Drowning is a common consequence during these events.

Discussion will focus on these natural disasters and the impact they have had within Australia. Further the role of lifesavers and lifesaving organisations in disaster risk reduction will be discussed.

### Flooding Case Study:

The recent extreme weather events in Australia highlighted the risks of life and property of major flooding events.

Nationwide there were 52 flood related drowning deaths last year. 38 deaths in 2010/11 were as a result of the flooding in Queensland, 17 occurring within a tragic 12 hour period in Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley. (Royal Life Saving National Drowning Report 2011).

Whilst flooding is a common occurrence, the impact of events of this size create significant drowning risk to those in areas under threat from inundation, as well as the ongoing risk as waters take time to recede.

Drowning prevention strategies need to be incorporated into national, regional and local disaster risk reduction programs. Further community awareness needs to be heightened about the dangers associated with flooding.

## Conference Themes - Call to Action in Priority Areas

The themes for the Conference link directly to the 14 goals around the 4 key priority areas of the **Australian Water Safety Strategy 2008-2011**. We recommend that all abstracts be aligned to the current Water Safety Strategy as per the goals listed below. Note, these goals will be slightly modified in the release of the 2012-2015 strategy during the conference.

### PRIORITY AREA ONE

## Adopt a Life Stages Approach

Adopting a life stages approach is the first key driver of the Strategy. Epidemiologically, life stages are used to differentiate between the complex drowning risk factors and exposure to hazards based on age. These vary naturally throughout a person's life, along with physical, emotional and social developmental stages.

#### Goal 1 - Children Under 5: Reduce Drowning Deaths in Children Under Five

Globally, drowning death rates are highest in children aged under five years. The most common locations where children under the age of five drown are backyard pools, dams/lakes and bathtubs.



#### Goal 2 - Men and Alcohol: Reduce Alcohol Related Drowning Deaths, Particularly in Men Aged 18-34

Males are over represented in drowning statistics across the globe. In Australia, our love of aquatic recreational pursuits and the consumption of alcohol in the context of recreation lead to an increased risk of drowning and a decreased ability to respond to the associated hazards. One study found that alcohol contributed to approximately 30% of drowning deaths associated with recreational aquatic activity and to approximately 35% of recreational boating drowning deaths.



#### Goal 3 - Older people (55+): Reduce Drowning Deaths in Older People

It is well documented that Australia's population is ageing and the ABS estimates that by 2020 there will be between 7.2 and 7.4 million Australians over the age of 55 years. Common locations where older victims drowned included the beach (20%), river (19%) and ocean (12%).



## PRIORITY AREA TWO

# Address High Risk Locations

The second key driver of the Australian Water Safety Strategy is the consideration of high risk drowning locations. An analysis of drowning data results in the identification of three key locations resulting in high rates of drowning: Rural and Remote locations, Surf Beaches, and Home Pools.



### Goal 4 - Rural and Remote Reduce Rural and Remote Drowning Deaths

Residents of rural and remote Australia are exposed to and use a range of water bodies. There is reduced accessibility to patrolled beaches and swimming pools. Research identified that rivers were regularly used for recreational purposes by rural residents and hazards such as submerged rocks and logs, variable water depths and moving banks are often present.



### Goal 5 - Surf Beaches: Address Surf Beach Drowning Deaths

The coastal regions of Australia continue to have the highest population density in the country and as a consequence, surf beaches experience high rates of drowning. Only about 400 of Australia's 11,011 beaches on 35,877 km of coastline are patrolled by lifeguard/ lifesaving services and each have varying hazards and associated risk ratings.

Further to natural population growth and relocation, our beaches receive over 55 million domestic and international visitors each year. This brings with it additional challenges such as language barriers and cultural differences.



### Goal 6 - Home Pools: Reduce Drowning Deaths in Home Pools

Home swimming pool drowning deaths represented 12% of all drowning deaths for the three year period between 2004-05 and 2006-07 as identified by research by Royal Life Saving. Home swimming pools remain the most common location for drowning death and injury in children under five.



## PRIORITY AREA THREE

# Meet Key Drowning Challenges

Meeting key drowning challenges will require a range of different drowning prevention strategies dependent upon the background of the participant and the activities being undertaken prior to drowning. Priority Area Three highlights the need to consider people's cultural backgrounds and life experiences when developing these strategies.

### Goal 7 - High Risk Activities: Reduce Drowning Deaths Attributed to High Risk Recreational Activities



Recreational watercraft includes activities such as; boating, sailing, personal watercraft (PWC), canoeing, kayaking and surfing, and are a popular element of the Australian way of life. The extensive range of Australian waterways means that recreational watercraft related drowning deaths occur in almost all types of water bodies and often include multiple incidents.

### Goal 8 - High Risk Populations: Reduce Drowning Deaths in High Risk Populations



Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), tourist (both domestic and international), international students and Indigenous groups have been identified by the AWSC as communities at an increased risk of drowning and aquatic injury when compared to the rest of the Australian population.

### Goal 9 - Extreme Weather: Reduce the Impact of Climate Change and Extreme Weather on Drowning Deaths



The effects of climate change will vary across geographic regions and populations. Whilst the impact of climate change on rates of drowning and drowning death is difficult to forecast there are some proactive strategies that AWSC advocates to mitigate effects of this long term risk.



## PRIORITY AREA FOUR

# Strengthen Drowning Prevention Pillars

Reducing drowning deaths by 50% by 2020 will require a strong, collaborative and evidence based approach across all areas of the Strategy. Previous drowning prevention success has been attributed to a combination of drowning prevention pillars. The achievements made in reducing drowning in Australia by the water safety community are support for the effectiveness of these pillars. However maintenance of these pillars is continually required to ensure future success.

### Goal 10 - Safe Venues: Build Systems that Support Safe Aquatic Recreation Venues

There are many aquatic locations in Australia that have a range of safety issues and are managed by a variety of organisations. These venues include over 11,700 beaches, 400 of which are patrolled, over 1200 public swimming pools in metropolitan, regional and rural communities, and a diversity of waterways including rivers, lakes and dams that are used for recreational purposes.



### Goal 11 - Lifesaving People: Strengthen the Skills, Standards and Contribution of our Drowning Prevention People

Lifesaving and the work of water safety agencies has always been seen to build significant social capital for the individuals involved and for the broader Australian community. Lifesaving agencies have promoted this through fostering; social responsibility and volunteerism, improved personal and physical health, promoting skill development and education, and contributing to economic performance.



### Goal 12 - Legislation and Policy: Strengthen Policies, Legislation and Standards Related to Water Safety

While consistency of legislation and policies are important, the compliance with and enforcement of policy and legislation is critical to their effectiveness. There is a clear need for legislation, policies and standards to draw upon evidence based best practice. Policy agencies must also be reflective and responsive towards the changing evidence base.



### Goal 13 - Collaboration: Foster Collaborative Approaches to Drowning Prevention

Collaboration between the water safety agencies, government and the community is vital to ensuring the objectives and goals of this Strategy are met and the 50% reduction in drowning deaths is achieved.



### Goal 14 - Research: Extend the Drowning Prevention Evidence Base

It is vital that drowning prevention strategies and programs are based upon a solid evidence base. Of equal importance is the use of research strategies to fill gaps in our knowledge and to discover new and effective strategies.



## Call for Abstracts

---

The Australian Water Safety Council are seeking Abstracts for oral and posters presentations. **We recommend that all abstracts be aligned to the current Water Safety Strategy with particular focus given to the 14 goals.** Note, these goals will be slightly modified in the release of the 2012-2015 strategy during the conference.

If you, your team, organisation or agency have been involved in the delivery of a Water Safety/Drowning Prevention program, project or service, why not share this information and learn from others at the same time.

**Note:** All accepted abstracts for oral and poster presentations will be published in the conference program and proceedings booklet. It is the author's responsibility to ensure accuracy of content, spelling and presentation, as abstracts will be published exactly as submitted. The Conference Program and Proceedings Booklet will include Abstracts only, with presentation papers not required as per previous AWSC conferences.

### **Abstract submission process (Closing Date - Friday 16 March 2012)**

Abstracts are to be submitted online at [www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au) and need to be submitted by Friday 16 March 2012. Visit the conference website to view and download Abstract details including abstract guide and template.

If you have any questions in relation to the abstract submission process, please do not hesitate to contact the Conference Secretariat on Phone: +61 (0)2 8217 3123 or [msharp@rlssa.org.au](mailto:msharp@rlssa.org.au).

### **Abstract notification (Notification Date – Tuesday 27 March 2012)**

Notification of accepted abstracts will be sent to presenting authors by Tuesday 27 March 2012 together with presentation guidelines and briefing notes.

### **Oral Presentations**

There will be a range of oral presentations from longer 30 minute presentations to shorter 20 minute snapshot presentations which includes question time. Strict time schedules will be followed. Accepted presenters will be requested to review their abstract for final inclusion in the program and proceedings booklet by Friday 20 April 2012.

### **Poster Presentations**

Poster presentations will be on display for the entire conference. Time will be allocated at the conference for delegates to look at poster presentations and to talk to the authors. Authors will be expected to be available to discuss their work during this time. Posters may be accompanied by handouts.

### **Best Conference Paper, Poster and People's Choice Award**

Awards will be presented for the Best Conference Paper, Poster and the People's Choice Award at the closing of the Conference on Day Two.

---

#### IMPORTANT DATES

Abstracts for oral and poster presentations close:  
**Friday 16 March 2012**

Abstract notification to authors by Conference Secretariat by:  
**Tuesday 27 March 2012**

For successful submissions - Abstracts reviewed and revised for proceedings booklet by:  
**Friday 20 April 2012**

---



## Conference Summary Details

**Date: Monday 4 and Tuesday 5 June 2012**

Registration Per person	Early Registration Close 30 April 2012	Late Registration Close 29 May 2012	Includes:
<b>TWO DAY REGISTRATION</b>	\$545	\$595	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference Satchel &amp; Materials</li> <li>• Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea for both conference days</li> <li>• Conference Dinner</li> </ul>
<b>ONE DAY REGISTRATION</b>	\$275	\$295	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference Satchel &amp; Materials</li> <li>• Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea for one conference day</li> </ul>
<b>CONFERENCE DINNER - Monday 4 June 2012</b>	\$120	\$140	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference Dinner (7pm-11pm)</li> </ul>

### Registration Details:

Please make registrations online at [www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au). Please note, registrations will not be confirmed until payment is received in full. Upon receipt of your registration payment, an official confirmation letter and conference information kit will be sent to you.

### Venue:

#### **Novotel Hotel Brighton Beach**

Cnr. The Grand Parade & Princess Street, Brighton-le-Sands NSW



### Accommodation:

#### **Novotel Hotel Brighton Beach**

**Special Conference Rate** - \$214 Single, \$229 Double including breakfast per night. Rates are inclusive of GST. Accommodation bookings are to be made directly with the Reservations Department, Novotel Hotel Brighton Beach, Telephone +61 (0)2 9556 5111, Fax: +61 (0)2 9556 5138 or email [h1656@accor.com](mailto:h1656@accor.com). Booking reference: Australian Water Safety Conference 2012. A copy of the accommodation booking form can be downloaded from [www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au).

#### **Accommodation – alternate options**

There are plenty of accommodation options within a short taxi ride of the venue at the airport.

---

### Tradeshow Display / Exhibitors

Conference delegates will have the opportunity during breaks (i.e. morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea) to mingle amongst the display booths/tables and to ask questions to those directly exhibiting.

For further information and package details please contact the Conference Secretariat on + 61 (0) 2 8217 3123 or [msharp@rlssa.org.au](mailto:msharp@rlssa.org.au)



### Sponsorship

For detailed information on the sponsorship opportunities available including costs and package details, please contact the Conference Secretariat on Phone + 61 (0) 2 8217 3123 or [msharp@rlssa.org.au](mailto:msharp@rlssa.org.au) to obtain a sponsorship information package.

### Conference Supporters

The conference is proudly supported by the Australian Water Safety Council Members:

Royal Life Saving Society - Australia (RLSSA)

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA)

Australian Council for the Teaching of Swimming and Water Safety (AUSTSWIM)

Australian Leisure Facilities Association (ALFA)

Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)

Australian National Sports Fishing Association (ANSFA)

Australian Swimming Coaches & Teachers Association (ASCTA)

Swimming Australia Limited (SAL)

Divers Alert Network (DAN) Asia-Pacific

The Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia (Kidsafe)

Farmsafe Australia

National Marine Safety Committee

Surfing Australia

Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport (SCORS)

### Conference Committee

The conference committee comprises the following members:

Justin Scarr (Convenor), Royal Life Saving Society - Australia

Monique Sharp (Conference Secretariat / Organiser), Royal Life Saving Society – Australia

Jared Wilson, AUSTSWIM

Matt Thompson, Surf Life Saving Australia

Amy Peden, Royal Life Saving Society - Australia

### Further Information

For further information on the conference go to the Australian Water Safety Council website at [www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au) or contact the Conference Secretariat on Phone: + 61 (0) 2 8217 3123 or email [msharp@rlssa.org.au](mailto:msharp@rlssa.org.au).

## Registration

# Australian Water Safety Conference 2012

From Strategy to Action

Monday 4 and Tuesday 5 June 2012

Novotel Hotel Brighton Beach

Cnr. The Grand Parade & Princess Street, Brighton-le-Sands NSW

Should you require a tax invoice to be sent to a different party, please advise in writing the name of that party at the time of submitting this registration enrolment form. Reprints of the Tax Invoice will be subject to a \$5 administration fee. Confirmation of your registration will be sent to you by mail and should be received within 14 days.

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Title: Dr Mr Mrs Ms Miss Other:

Surname: First Name:

Name as it should appear on the Name Badge:

Organisation: Employment Position:

Mailing Address:

Suburb: State: Postcode:

Telephone: Fax:

Email: Web Address:

Special Dietary Requirements:

**Privacy Act:** The Privacy Act 2001 provides, that before your name and address details can be published in the list of conference delegates for distribution to fellow delegates or any other party, you must give your consent. If you DO NOT wish to have your name, address and details to be included in the list of delegates please tick here.

### REGISTRATION FEE

Registration Per person	Early Registration Close 30 April 2012	Late Registration Close 29 May 2012	Registration (Please tick)
<b>TWO DAY REGISTRATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conference Satchel &amp; Materials</li><li>• Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea for both conference days</li><li>• Conference Dinner</li></ul>	\$545	\$595	
<b>ONE DAY REGISTRATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conference Satchel &amp; Materials</li><li>• Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea for one conference day</li></ul>	\$275	\$295	Please select day <input type="checkbox"/> Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday
<b>CONFERENCE DINNER</b> (4 hours) Extra Tickets Monday 4 June 2012 (7pm-11pm)	\$120	\$140	

**PAYMENT:** Please register on-line at [www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au)

**Cheques:** Make cheques payable to "Royal Life Saving Society - Australia"

**Mail:** PO Box 558, Broadway NSW 2007

**Fax:** + 61 (0) 2 8217 3199

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact the Conference Secretariat, Phone + 61 (0) 2 8217 3123, Fax + 61 (0) 2 8217 3199 or [msharp@rlssa.org.au](mailto:msharp@rlssa.org.au).



**KEY CONFERENCE DATES**

Abstract submissions close:  
Friday 16 March 2012

Abstract notification by:  
Tuesday 27 March 2012

Early Bird Registrations close:  
Monday 30 April 2012

Registrations close:  
Tuesday 29 May 2012

[www.watersafety.com.au](http://www.watersafety.com.au)

**AUSTRALIAN WATER SAFETY COUNCIL**

Suite 6, Level 4 173-179 Broadway (Cnr Mountain St)  
Broadway NSW 2007

PO Box 558, Broadway NSW 2007

Tel: + 61 (0) 2 8217 3111 Fax: + 61 (0) 2 8217 3199

