



# TARRTHÁIL LIFESAVING

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF IRISH WATER SAFETY



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2015 ISSUE NO. 4

An Taoiseach learns BLS

The History of Irish Water Safety - Book Launch

European Junior & Masters Championships

Irish Water Safety - National Awards Ceremony



**WINTER 2015 ISSUE 4**

*Cover Photograph:*  
 Lifeguard Jack Whelan keeps  
 watch over Curracloe Swim Week  
 (background), while Joe Bergin, Laois  
 Water Safety, instructs An Taoiseach,  
 Mr Enda Kenny T.D., in pediatric CPR.  
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Tarrtháil / Lifesaving - Irish Water Safety



## Dear Members,

I am delighted to introduce our final magazine of 2015 that reflects many of the activities of the second part of our year. It is wonderful to see all the "usual" activities that are the backbone of the organisation – many people enjoying and benefiting from our summer weeks (despite the weather!) and many more returning to our winter programmes.

We had our best year ever in Lifesaving Sport with a significant increase in the number of participants at our National Competitions. Internationally, we achieved our greatest success to date, with 38 medals across Senior and Junior Championships at European level. Please read the detail about the wonderful achievements of our teams

and individuals. Congratulations to all participants, coaches and particularly the Sports Commission who have the onerous task of co-ordinating ever-growing rates of participation nationwide.

At the end of 2015, we launched our "History of Irish Water Safety". This commemorates seventy years of Water Safety history in this country, but it actually goes back eighty years, to the formation of the first committee in County Clare. Many of the principles of those first groups are still with us today. It makes for a great read. I wish to thank Tiarnan O'Sullivan for his superb research and writing.

We have seen great participation by our Instructor's at National upskilling courses. Sixty Tutors qualified with the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) Cardiac First Response (CFR) Award at a recent course. These Tutors will now roll out CFR upskilling of all instructors in their area.

Over the last two years, IWS volunteers have qualified almost 3,500 young people in CPR, including defibrillation. Meeting the associated challenges in the investment of time and equipment is an enormous achievement and reason we should be proud that once again, Water Safety Area Committees (WSACs) rose to that challenge.

Please keep your magazine articles coming in. It is a great way to inform us all of what is going on. My thanks to Roger Sweeney (head office), and Leo Mahon, both of the Marketing Commission and Tomás McGuinness for the production of this magazine. It is also a great way of staying informed and feeling connected to the big picture - all of us working to the common goal of drowning prevention.

Thank you for all your endeavours in this regard.

*Breda Collins*

Chairman, Irish Water Safety

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# A Note from An Taoiseach, Mr Enda Kenny TD

## A HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO IRISH WATER SAFETY

I wish to congratulate Irish Water Safety on reaching a milestone anniversary – seven decades is a major achievement and the work your organisation has carried out in that time has saved many lives.

Tragically, on average, 135 people lose their lives to drowning in Ireland each year, and while that is 135 too many, I have no doubt that the figure would be even higher if it were not for the ongoing work of Irish Water Safety volunteers who continue to pass on excellent swimming and lifesaving skills.

The ethos of proud volunteerism that is so strong in your organisation is to be commended. I have had the privilege of seeing the benefit of your volunteers on a number of occasions, most recently when I visited Irish Water Safety volunteers at the National Ploughing Championships 2015. The enthusiasm with which you apply yourselves to teaching a range of lifesaving skills is a credit to you all and those who volunteered in the past seven decades.

Not only does your work empower the individual, it empowers communities. Cities, towns and villages now benefit from a network of Instructors, Examiners and Organisers who selflessly deliver a syllabus designed to improve the public's skills and change their attitudes and behaviour so as to minimise their risk of drowning. Your primary school syllabus, a component of the national curriculum, is a fine example of Irish Water Safety's contribution to developing a water safety culture here in Ireland. Children are our greatest asset and I want to thank those within our education system who engage with Irish Water Safety to deliver the primary school syllabus.

Your Lifesaving sports programme has highlighted the importance of Lifeguarding skills and has engaged thousands of children, teenagers and adults nationwide and made champions of many both on the national and international aquatics sports circuit. Your Lifeguard training and assessment programme continues to provide a corps of Lifeguards for pools and beaches nationwide and the hundreds of people literally plucked from drowning each year is testament to the need for Irish Water Safety as a statutory body, a registered charity and a voluntary organisation with over 4,000 members eager to safeguard our population's future enjoyment of our wonderful aquatic environment. Here's to a bright future for Irish Water Safety – I wish you all a very Happy 70th Birthday and every success with your extensive programmes and partnerships well into the future.

Very best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



ENDA KENNY, T.D.  
TAOISEACH





# LAUNCH



# The History of Irish Water Safety

The launch of the book by Tiarnan O'Sullivan

It was three years ago that I undertook the project to write a history of Irish Water Safety. One of the first realisations I had about the task was the fact that 70 years (which became 80 years after initial research was complete) is a long enough stretch of time to condense into a novel-length book.

Having no idea where to start, CEO John Leech advised me to travel to the well-known town Milltown Malbay in Co. Clare. It was here I met local woman Jane Hurley and learned about a relatively unheard of "prologue" to the official start of the organisation in 1945. Community reaction to the drowning of a local nun at Spanish Point in 1934 led to the formulation of the first Irish water safety committee.

The book unpacks this story in further detail and takes a look at key personalities and organisational developments throughout IWS's rich history. I got into a rhythm of travelling around the country to various towns, speaking to people who had played some part in IWS over the last eight decades. All interviews were recorded and translated into the language of the historical narrative, along



Author Tiarnan O'Sullivan, IWS Chairman Breda Collins and Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government, Mr Alan Kelly T.D.

with material from a host of other sources. These included the archives of the Irish Red Cross, the IWS archive, the Kenny Bookstore in Co. Galway and a couple of attics along the way. Newspaper articles, newsletters and photographs were collected and filed and the text started to get going.

Writing this has been an amazing and highly educational task.

I must express huge thanks to the staff at HQ for being so welcoming and helpful. Also, editor Lorna Siggins and Publisher Liamy MacNally (CPR Publications) for trojan work during the editing stages. This has been a massive learning experience, not least from meeting such inspirational people around Ireland who devoted so much to something they truly believe in. Without these people there may have been no history to write.

Happy reading!





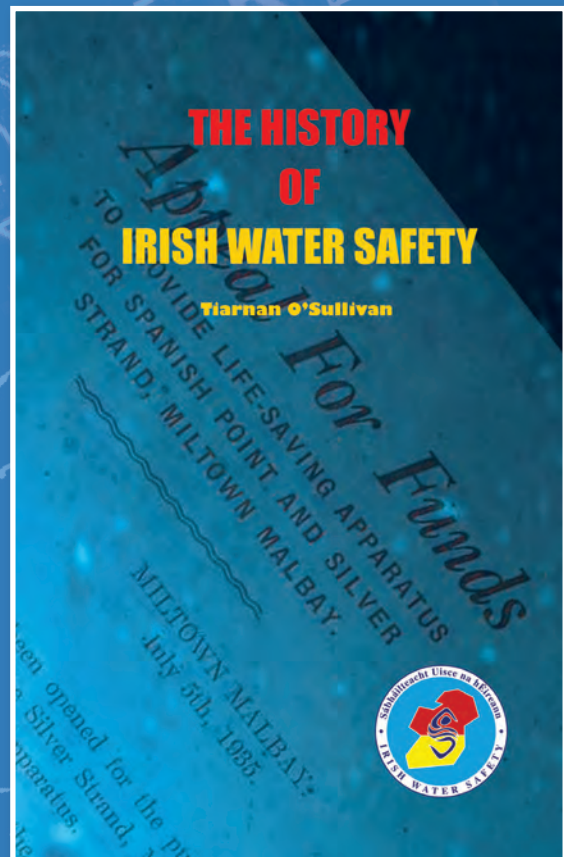
# THE HISTORY OF IRISH WATER SAFETY



National Lifesaving Championships 1957-58



Dublin Ladies Lifesaving Team 1962



Author Tiarnan O'Sullivan

*...from 1945 to today... the inspiring communities  
and people that have relentlessly pursued water safety  
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# Irish Water Safety

## IWS Annual Awards at Dublin Castle on Tuesday 17th November 2015



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Diarmuid McInerney from Donegal with his Seiko Just In Time Award.

### Just in Time Award

Diarmuid McInerney, Donegal.

On the 16th May 2015, Diarmuid was working on a golf course in Bundoran when he heard a cry for help. Upon sighting two people having difficulty in the water he advised the Coastguard and went to the aid of the swimmers. Diarmuid was passed a lifebuoy by a member of the public and without hesitation he entered the water. He instructed the two swimmers to thread water.

Conditions were rough but Diarmuid managed to pull the nearest person to him to safety onto nearby rocks. The Bundoran lifeboat arrived but was unable to approach the swimmers due to the heavy swell surging onto the rocks.

After four attempts of throwing the ringbuoy, the casualty finally grabbed hold of the buoyancy aid and was brought to safety. The rescuer used his IWS lifesaving skills to carry out an effective and safe rescue. Both swimmers made a full recovery.



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Garda Cormac McGill and Garda Kevin Gaynor stationed in Dublin with their Seiko Just In Time Awards.

### Just in Time Award

Garda Kevin Gaynor & Garda Cormac McGill, Dublin.

On the 7th March 2014, at approximately 5am, Garda Gaynor and McGill received a call that a man had fallen into the sea at Clontarf Road.

When they arrived at the scene, the person was conscious and calling out for help. It became evident that this person's life was in danger so, without hesitation, and with the aid of a lifebuoy, both Gardai entered the water. They secured the man onto the lifebuoy and brought him safely to shore. The man made a full recovery.



# National Awards 2015

Some of the recipients of the 'Just in Time' Awards...



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Tadhg Diver, Danny Gillespie, Connie Gillespie and Eamonn Gillespie with their Seiko Just In Time Awards.

## Just in Time Award

Danny Gillespie, Eamonn Gillespie, Connie Gillespie & Tadhg Diver, Donegal.

On the 13th of September 2014 at approximately 8pm at Bunbeg pier, Donegal, Danny, Eamonn, Connie Gillespie along with Tadhg Diver heard a loud noise and immediately went to investigate.

Eamonn immediately went for help and called emergency services. Without hesitation Mr Gillespie steered his boat to where the van was located and with the assistance of Connie and Tadhg managed to attach a rope to the rear of the van and towed it to the harbour slipway. Eamonn, who was waiting at the pier, secured the rope and assisted by the fact that they were in shallow water, Danny managed to get the door open to get the person to safety. The person was subsequently taken to hospital and made a full recovery.



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Garda Frank Howlin and Detective Garda Jo Ann Holahan with their Seiko Just In Time Awards.

## Just in Time Award

Detective Garda Jo Ann Holahan & Garda Frank Howlin, Dublin.

On the 23rd April 2015 at approximately 6.45pm D/Garda Jo Ann Holahan & her colleague Garda Frank Howlin received a call regarding two people in distress in the sea at Salthill. Upon arrival to the scene they assessed the situation and without hesitation D/Garda Holohan grabbed a ringbuoy and swam out to sea towards the unconscious woman and her distressed cousin.

Garda Howlin having established the situation - requested further Garda assistance and the services of the RNLI and Coastguard. Using a lifebuoy, both Gardai brought the women to safety to nearby rocks at the bottom of the cliff. They successfully administered CPR on the unconscious woman. Both women were treated for Hypothermia and made a fully recovery.

(Photos: David Branigan/Oceansport)



# Irish Water Safety

## IWS Annual Awards at Dublin Castle on Tuesday 17th November 2015



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Kilkenny & Dublin Gardaí Aidan Monahan and Niall Kenny with their Seiko Just In Time Awards.

### Just in Time Award

Garda Aidan Monahan & Garda Niall Kenny  
Kilkenny & Dublin

**First rescue:** On the 23rd of July 2010, at the River Nore, Kilkenny - Garda Monahan (Off Duty) came to the rescue of a woman in distress in the water and with the aid of two life buoys that were thrown to him during the rescue he managed to bring the casualty and himself to safety.

**Second Rescue -** On the 4th of May of 2012 at approximately 4am, Garda Monahan was on patrol and received a call regarding a man in distress at the River Liffey. Upon reaching the scene, Garda Monaghan requested the assistance of the Dublin Fire Brigade; he then retrieved a lifebuoy and without hesitation entered the water. He brought the casualty to the side of the river, where Garda Niall Kenny helped to bring the casualty to safety.



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Fergal Swaine from Dublin with his Seiko Just In Time Award.

### Just in Time Award

Fergal Swaine  
Dublin

On the 7th May 2014, Fergal was cycling to work when he came upon a person in distress in the water at the Canal at Cross Guns Bridge, Phibsboro.

Without hesitation he grabbed a ringbuoy and entered the water. Upon reaching the man, he grabbed hold of his jacket and managed to swim to the bank where a number of people helped to pull him to safety. Fergal administered CPR and the casualty was taken to hospital.



# National Awards 2015

Some of the recipients of the 'Just in Time' Awards...



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Garda Brian O'Donnell with a Community & Social Responsibility Award and Seamus McCarthy with Fionnuala Quigley who received Seiko Just In Times Awards

## Just in Time Award

Seamus McCarthy, Fionnuala Quigley,  
Garda Brian O'Donnell  
Inish Mor, Aran Islands

On the 8th of April, Apu Gupta, an Indian tourist was swept off a rocky ledge by a wave on Inis Mór, Galway. The accident was witnessed by tourist and advanced paramedic Seamus McCarthy and his girlfriend Fionnuala Quigley.

Seamus phoned 999 but there was no reception, so Fionnuala ran to the nearest house to call for help. Meanwhile, Seamus put together a makeshift rescue rope using a jacket and backpack and lowered it to the casualty. She tightened the backpack around her waist and Seamus and another person began to pull her slowly up the cliff face.

They successfully pulled her to safety and Seamus managed to stabilise her until the rescue helicopter arrived then took her to the hospital. The person made a full recovery.



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting John Clancy from Galway with his Seiko Just In Time Award.

## Just in Time Award

John Clancy  
Galway

On the evening of the 27th October 2015, John was walking along the Claddagh quay when he noticed a person in the water.

He called out but there was no response. John called out to two people nearby to call emergency services and without hesitation entered the water and swam towards the casualty. At this stage the casualty had begun to submerge and John had lost sight of this person. He successfully retrieved the casualty and pulled the person to safety.

(Photos: David Branigan/Oceansport)





# Irish Water Safety

## IWS Annual Awards at Dublin Castle on Tuesday 17th November 2015

1. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Martin Murphy, Don McAuliffe, Eammon Fuller, Denis Merritt and John Goggin from Mallow Search & Rescue with their 20-Year Service Awards.

2. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Maura Burns from Louth with her 15-Year Service Award.

3. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Darina Halpenny from Dublin with her 10-Year Service Award.

4. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Ann McLaughlin from Donegal with her 10-Year Service Award.



1



2



3



4



# National Awards 2015

## Some of the recipients of the Service Awards...

5. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Noeleen Skelly from Cavan with her 10-Year Service Award.

6. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Linda O'Neill from Wicklow with her 10-Year Service Award.

7. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Declan Marnane from Wicklow with his 10-Year Service Award.

8. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting James Hassey from Waterford his 10-Year Service Award.

(Photos: David Branigan/Oceansport)







# Irish Water Safety

## IWS Annual Awards at Dublin Castle on Tuesday 17th November 2015

1. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Seamus O'Neill from Donegal receives a 40-Year Service Award.

2. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Tom Doyle from Wexford with his 40-Year Service Award.

3. Sarah Meehan from Donegal, winner of five medals at the 2015 European Masters Championships in Spain receives her 15-Year Service Award from Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government.

4. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting John Kearney from Galway with his 30-Year Service Award.





# National Awards 2015

## Some of the recipients of Service Awards...

5. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Tom Kavanagh from Galway with his 30-Year Service Award.

6. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting to Professor Ita Richardson from Limerick City her 30-Year Service Award.

7. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Maeve Brady from Dublin with her 30-Year Service Award.

8. Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Aidan Collins from Dublin with his 30-Year Service Award.

*(Photos: David Branigan/Oceansport)*





# BLS & CFR Delivery

By Colm Dempsey, Paul Murphy, Jocelyn Cunningham PHECC Working Group

The IWS council appointed a PHECC working group to oversee the delivery of BLS & CFR training in January 2015. The working group comprises of Paul Murphy, Jocelyn Cunningham & Colm Dempsey.

The first task tackled was the renewal of IWS status as a recognised teaching institution for the delivery of Community First Responder Courses (CFR) under the Pre Hospital Emergency Council (PHECC).

Training bodies who deliver accredited training under the syllabus of PHECC are required to go through this registration process ever 3 years. This applies from entry level in the provision of pre hospital care at CFR level, all the way up to Advanced Paramedic.

As the statutory body responsible for pre hospital training PHECC have introduced rigours quality standards for the delivery and quality control of their courses.

The working group were required to carry out a quality review of how IWS manage the delivery and presentation of its BLS & CFR training and the structures and procedures that were in place to monitor the quality of training delivered by IWS.

This review and development of new quality management procedures and was completed by the working group at the end of June and accepted by PHECC.

Historically there was a panel of about 15 examiners who acted as national tutors for AED training which evolved out of training given by Dr. Tony Hanley about 17 years ago, and they have met on several occasions with Dr. Hanley. With the establishment of PHECC, working on behalf of IWS, Paddy Cummins was able to establish that PHECC would recognise the training given at BLS levels as a shortened route to the CFR award citing the BLS as Recognised Prior Learning (RPL). At the time it was also agreed that IWS instructors would be allowed to up skill to become CFR Instructors using the RPL route.

Just over 2 years ago most of the IWS instructors were unskilled with the CFR award, which then allowed them to deliver CFR courses. Many instructors' certs will now be out of date. Currently plans are underway to recertify all IWS Instructors with their CFR Award and this training will be delivered between January & April 2016. In order to carry out the up skilling of IWS Instructors nationally, the working group has expanded the CFR Tutor panel.

At a recent training day in Athlone 50 examiners were presented with the new quality procedures for the delivery and monitoring of CFR training. During the day they also undertook their recertification of their CFR qualification. These examiners are being appointed to act as national tutors under

the working group and have given a commitment that they will fill this role for a minimum of 5 years in their local areas.

## Role of IWS CFR National Tutors

1. Prepare and deliver IWS CFR instructor courses
2. Prepare and deliver IWS CFR recertification courses under RPL for IWS Instructors
3. Moderate and invalidate CFR courses delivered by IWS instructors delivered by area committees & private providers
4. Act as subject matter experts on BLS & CFR training & delivery
5. Provide feedback to the working group on local issues for BLS & CFR

Currently the working group are finalising the format and presentations that the tutors will use in providing the recertification courses to IWS Instructors. The training day will be orientated towards quality & Paperwork management, the use of training DVD and other aids.

Irish Water Safety is subject to yearly inspections by PHECC of all course paperwork and will include a course inspection of an instructor's recertification course and a CFR course.

Re-certification of IWS instructors will take place between January and April 2016. All water safety area committees are asked to plan a training date for this period. When your date is decided on, please inform Jocelyn Cunningham so she may appoint tutors to deliver the course.

The training day will require at 5 hours. Instructors who are unable to attend must make their own arrangements to find a re-certification course in another area, before the end of April 2016. Instructor qualifications that expire between now and April 2016 are still in a position to teach BLS, but cannot deliver a CFR course till such time as they have re-certified.

Trainee instructors will only be eligible to a CFR cert when they attend the recertification course, as trainee instructors they are not covered under the RPL route. Once qualified as a full instructor they can teach BLS 1,2,3 but must wait till they have been unskilled by a national tutor before they can deliver the CFR course.

Next on the agenda for the working group is to review the ILCOR guidelines issued in September and conduct a review of the BLS syllabus in light of the ILCOR guidelines.

Queries to [cfr@iws.ie](mailto:cfr@iws.ie)

# CFR Tutor Workshop

Sunday 15 November 2015, Athlone - IWS TRAINING



Above: Ronnie Horan, IWS CFR Tutor.



Right: Jim Dwyer, Dublin.



Above: Workshop activities circle IWS CFR Tutor Pat Cummins.



Right: Fiona Carroll, Kerry.



# European Junior & Masters

Team Ireland were on fire at the European Junior Lifesaving Championships which were held in Torrevieja, Spain from the 22-28th September, coming home with 31 European Medals and making themselves known as a team to watch on the International Lifesaving Stage.

Team Ireland won the female beach competition with the overall team in 3rd place on the beach and 6th place overall out of 16 teams competing. This is the best result ever by an Irish International Lifesaving Team and it was outstanding to have our competitors do battle with the best in Europe over the 5 days of competition.

Surf Lifesaving is a sport where athletes speed, power, skills, fitness and stamina are tested in the pool, beach and ocean settings. There are 10 pool based events which include swimming under obstacles, towing a 60kg lifesaving manikin and swimming with fins. In the beach there are events on sand (90m sprint, 4.90m sprint relay and beach flags) with another 7 events in the sea.

Ireland set the standard on day 1 of the competition in the SERC (Simulated Emergency Rescue Competition), the event that the athletes lifesaving skills are tested when 4 lifesavers are faced with a scenario and in 2 minutes they have to deal with the situation as best as possible. Denise Bolger, Wexford captained the team of Joe Mooney, Sligo, Rory Mc Evoy and



Lily Barrett and Roisin Cahill secure first and third in the Ocean Woman event.

Roisin Cahill, Clare to deal with the scenario of a capsized boat with 10 people drowning in the water in an efficient, successful, practical manner.

Next up was 2 days of pool competition where Rory Mc Evoy, Clare picked up a fantastic bronze medal in the 200m obstacle competition, the first individual medal for an Irish Junior Competitor at a European Championships. Joe Mooney, Sligo joined him in the final and with individual finals in other events





# Championships 2015

By Triona McMenamin *Alicante, Spain*

by Emer Kelly, Emma O'Brien, Wicklow and Lily Barrett, Clare Team Ireland picked up super points after the first two days. Team Ireland was excited heading into the beach competition, traditionally the stronger of the two disciplines and this team performed to perfection. Rory McEvoy, Clare set the standard in the first final of the day winning the male surf race which from a start on the sand competitors run into the water, swim 400m around pre-set markers and finish back on the beach. Cillian Melly, Mayo added valuable team points in 6th place with Lily Barrett (4th) and Roisin Cahill (5th) representing in the girls surf swim. Roisin added to the medal tally with a bronze in the surf ski race, a 600m race on a ski quite similar to a kayak.

The ladies beach sprint relay was a fantastic final with the Irish girls of Denise Bolger, Emma O'Brien, Emer Kelly and Lily Barrett racing down to the wire with the French, Spanish and British to come away with silver medals. Denise and Emma made the top 8 in the individual sprints and this shows the strength of beach sprinting in Ireland.

In the most gruelling event of the competition the Oceanman and woman Team Ireland showed Europe how talented they are with Lily Barrett being crowned European Junior Oceanwoman and Roisin Cahill joining her on the podium in bronze medal position. In the boys even Hugh Mc Mahon and Rory McEvoy also had top 8 finishes which is outstanding. In this event each competitor completes a swim, then a board paddle, followed by a ski leg and a run, a total of 1.5km of racing.

Lily Barrett did a double also being crowned European Junior Board Champion with Roisin Cahill in 5th and Joe Mooney in 4th for the boys and Kai Wilmott, Waterford also representing in the final.

The team events were up next with Lily and Roisin dominating the female board rescue where Roisin swim out to a marker bouy 200m out to sea, raised her arm and Lily ran out with her paddle board to pick her up in a lifeguard simulated rescue and they both paddled in to shore together. The girls were being chased by a strong French, British and Dutch teams but paddled strongly together to come away with the gold. In the boys Rory McEvoy had an amazing swim out to the bouy and with Kai Wilmott doing a great board paddle the boys were rewarded with a bronze medal.

In the rescue tube rescue Emer Kelly was the subject for Emma O'Brien, both who had outstanding heat and final swims teamed up with Brodie Edmead and Denise Bolger to also come home European Rescue Tube Champion with Team Ireland singing the National Anthem once again. Emer Kelly also had a fantastic flags competition with an individual silver medal, a musical statue like competition where competitors lie down on their fronts and on the whistle jump up and run

20m to grab a flag. If the competitor doesn't get a flag then they are out. Emer was joined in the final by Denise Bolger who had some great runs to 7th place.

The final event of the competition was the Taplin, a relay of the above Ocean Woman and Man. This event really proves who the strongest and fittest teams are as each team must put a different athlete on each leg of the relay, the swim, board, ski and run. The Irish Ladies now European Junior Taplin Champions led out with Lily (board), then Emer (Swim) and Roisin (ski) to hand over to Denise (run) who crossed the line in gold medal position. In the boys event Kai (board) hit Rory McEvoy (swim) onto Hugh Mc Mahon (ski) and Ryan Shannon (run) to finish in a super silver medal position.

The team were coached in the pool by Dave Butler and Brendie Mc Grath with Triona Mc Menamin and Oisín Mc Grath coaching on the beach. Alison Deane was Team Manager in Spain with Charlie Gillispee Team Physio, Seamus O'Neill and Charlie Kennedy equipment managers. Irish Water Safety was also represented on the competition referee board with Clare Mc Grath and Daniel Wrafter.

Below: Lily Barrett secures Gold in the Board Rescue.





# European Senior Championships 2015

by Bernard Cahill **Wales**

The team travelled to Wales to the European Senior Championships 2015. A very youthful and well prepared team went over, following a gruelling winters training. 6 of the athletes are currently either full time or party time in the UL sport performance centre in Limerick, training up to 10 sessions a week in the water. Training camps and testing days helped the country's finest lifesavers prepare for the championships. The pool events were contested in the University pool in Swansea, and the beach events held in Aberavon. The beach has been frequented many times by some of the competitors and gave them an edge over other countries. Following a highly contested trail in June, the team knew that the standards had been raised once again, and that the team travelling would be able to compete with the best in Europe.

Each year, through the commitment of the Irish water safety sports commission, the athletes, coaches, and parents, the standards of lifesaving sport in Ireland continue to rise. Every time we travel internationally, we improve and bring home even more medals and records.

## Day 1

After the opening ceremony Dave Butler, Joe Mooney, James Hassey were straight into competition in the SERC event (Simulated Emergency Response Competition). This event tests initiative judgement, knowledge and abilities of lifesavers in a simulated situation. Straight out of the gates the team picked up a bronze medal, just behind France (1st) and Denmark (2nd).



## Day 2

Day two saw all teams commence the pool element of the championships. That morning saw 11 Irish records obliterated and 2 both the men's and women's line throw teams seeded first in the

finals of the line throw event. Favourites to win, the ladies team consisting of Denise Bolger and Emer Kelly were up first in the finals. First seed did not seem to faze Denise and

Emer, who raced flawlessly and took gold, our first of the championships. Only ten minutes later, hardly giving the rest of the team time to calm our excitement, our men's team consisting of David Butler and Cameron Steel blitzed the field in an epic final, and clenched another European senior title. Both teams showed incredible poise and control to be victorious in such a technical event. This was a huge confidence boost for the entire team.

## Day 3

Day three, also in the pool, saw sixteen more Irish records tumble. Top twenty and even top ten finishes see the Irish team move even closer to making individual finals in the pool events. Moving rapidly in the right direction the Irish team will certainly be featuring individually in the pool in the near future.

## Day 4

Day four was a rest day for all competitors. A much needed break to recover from two very tough days of racing in the pool. It gave the team a chance to prepare for the ocean events. Taking advantage of local knowledge and calculated management, the team hit the beach early and timed the tides to perfection, leaving all other teams arrive at the high tide. The Irish showed that they were tuned in and ready for action.

Coming out of the pool with four golds and four bronze gave the team a huge confidence boost. It was clear the team was in the shape of its life and was ready to begin battle in the sea.

## Day 5

Day five brought fourth the commencement of ocean events on Aberavon beach, a beach known to most of the competitors. With so many familiar faces and very "Irish" weather, the team felt at home.

Team Members	
Male	Female
Bernard Cahill	Roisin Cahill
James Hassey	Brodie Edmead
Joseph Mooney	Emma O'Brien
Hugh McMahon	Lily Barrett
David Butler	Emer Kelly
Cameron Steel	Denise Bolger
Management	
Triona McMenamin	Simon McGarrigle





The first morning on the beach, the team stormed into finals. Denise, Emer, Cameron all cruised into beach flags finals. Both the men's and women's board rescue teams showed great form winning their heats of the board rescue, proving that they would be a formidable force in the finals. Bernard also qualified for an A final in the ski event and the women's rescue tube team also secured a spot in the A final.

With a short break for lunch, the finals came hot and fast. The first final up, saw the young Irish board rescue team of Lily and Roisin, battle with the top teams in Europe. A tight race at the half way mark, the duo caught the wave of the day and positioned themselves alongside an experienced French team. Battling for a silver medal, the girls fought like warriors and soared past the French. It is worth noting that the French team paddler is a former world champion, and competed on the Iron woman series in Australia. They truly were up against the best. The two juniors paddled like professionals to seize their first ever medal on the senior stage.

Next up was the men's board rescue, where Joe and Ber battled courageously, to narrowly miss out on a podium position, finishing in a close fourth.

The ladies rescue tube team (Emma, Emer, Denise and Brodie) fought hard and came away with a seventh position. In the Ocean Relays, the men's team came 5th and the women's team coming in 6th.

On the sand, Denise and Emer represented us spectacularly in the beach flags event. In a gruelling event with many rounds, Denise finished in 5th position and Emer finished in 9th. Excellent results for the junior competitors, fighting against event specialists. The first day of the beach was a very successful day for the Irish, with every team member in finals. And not to forget, two more medals to add to the haul.

## Day 6

With most other teams wilting and looking dejected, and many European titles still up for grabs, the youthful Irish knuckled down and prepared to give all on the final day of competition.

The morning session saw many competitors reaching finals. Not long after starting saw Ber, James, Lily and Roisin successfully qualifying for finals of the board race. Without delay Ber, Lily and Rosin also qualified for the Ironman and Ironwoman finals. A demanding finals session was in store for the competitors in the water, with some competitors facing three back to back events.

With the ladies surf swim up first, the Irish saw Lily place 5th and Emer place in 11th. No easy task against the fastest female swimmers in Europe, in a notoriously rough and hard fought race. Next up saw Joe and Bernard take on the men's surf swim. Both having an excellent start, Ber moved into position, with Joe close behind in the lead bunch. Rounding the last marker, Ber kicked for home, finished with a lengthy lead and crossed the line in first place. Having succeeded multiple times on the European Junior Stage, and once on the World junior stage, this was Bernard's first senior title. Joe stormed through the field and finished in 9th, an excellent result for the junior competitor.

Next up was the board race, which saw James, Ber, Lily and Ro in action. The men's race saw 5 competitors on one wave, George Haynes of Great Britain took Gold, with Ber in a close second. Top seven finishes by Lily, Emma, Ro, Emma. The excellent performances did not stop there. The Ocean man event saw Ber fight off a top class field to win yet another silver medal. Gold and two silvers for the twenty one year old, all in the space of a half an hour. The Girls, Ro and Lily also performed excellently in their first senior iron internationally, both finishing top 10.

After a copious amount of successes, you would think the team would have been satisfied. There were still more events to go on the sand. Denise Bolger and Emma O'Brien, sealed their place in a highly contested A final of the 90m beach sprint. Fixated on only one thing, Denise blitzed the field from the start, clenching yet another European Senior Title for Irish team. Emma fought hard and came 6th in a photo finish. Both teams raced in finals of the beach sprint relay. The girl's team pulled out an epic performance, seizing a bronze medal, with our newly crowned European sprint champion bringing up the rear.

## Summary

Placing 5th on the beach, and 9th overall, the 2015 European Championships was certainly the most successful senior championships to date, proving to the rest of Europe that Ireland is a force that can mix with the best. Coming away with so many medals from such a young team is an outstanding performance. Lifesaving in Ireland has come on immensely over the last few years.

The reality is that, with so many European Champions (at a senior and junior level) coming from Ireland, and the bar being raised each year. The standard is so high, in a lot of events, being national champion means that you can make finals and expect medals on the European stage. The beach continues to be the dominant strength of the Irish team, but every year the Irish records are lowered in the pool, pushing us very close to A finals on the European Stage. Very soon, it can be expected that Ireland will be battling for top 3 overall finishes with epic performances both in the pool and on the beach.



# Reflections on recent statutory, charitable and voluntary activities



Jocelyn Cunningham at IWS Head Office for European Maritime Day, celebrated on 20 May each year to raise European citizens' awareness of the seas and their importance. It was established jointly by the European Council, European Parliament and European Commission in 2008 as part of the EU maritime policy. In support of the initiative, Irish Water Safety launched a new website (in background) called [www.safetyzone.ie](http://www.safetyzone.ie) that encourages members of the public to train with registered training providers before engaging in aquatic activities.

Valerie Case & Gerald Fleming, Met Eireann talking about CPR at this year's Ploughing Championships.



All eyes and ears on IWS Laois Volunteer Stephen O'Toole at the National Ploughing Championships 2015.



## Annual RoSPA Conference 2015

by John Leech

IWS has been a member of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) for over 40 years. They run some good conferences and prepare some very useful and helpful reports on accident prevention for both Road, fire and water environments. They also issue guidelines in relation to water safety. This year I received an invitation to attend their Annual Conference from the RNLI. The Conference was held in the historic city of Durham.

Professor Joost Birens, a former lifeguard and Dutch researcher, presented the WHO Global Drowning Report which indicates that one person drowns every 85 seconds on our planet. Joost is also the ILS representative at the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR). He encouraged delegates to study it. You can download it at [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/diseases/global-report-on-drowning/en](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/diseases/global-report-on-drowning/en)

George Rawlinson Chair of National Water Safety Forum in the UL launched the "UK Drowning and Water Safety Strategy 2016

to 2026". The secretariat is provided by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. It has taken over two years of work to complete this strategy, which was based on the Australian model. There are six specialist advisory groups within it that deal with Beach Safety, Inland Water Safety, Sea Safety, Swimming Pool Safety, Water Sports Safety, Information & Research. The membership comprises of representatives from all the aquatic organisations, the Maritime Coast Guard Agency, the RNLI, RLSS and local authorities. Their vision is a future without drowning, they realise that collaboration is essential if they are to succeed in reducing drowning fatalities in the UK.

Terry Collins, CEO of Durham City Council then arranged a visit for delegates along their river bank where they have completed a Risk Assessment and completed the recommendations within the report and have so far managed to eliminate drownings within the city boundary. On review of the report they identified that there was no distinctive cause, mainly Students drowning from the university with drink taken.



# A stalworth of swimming and land based education delivery, Nick Corish

IWS WEXFORD



IWS Kildare - Saturday Morning Junior Water Safety Class Instructors - Naas

Back; (LtoR) Hugh Logue - Trainee IWS Instructor, Eva Murphy - IWS Instructor, Aoife Sexton - Trainee IWS Instructor, Aoife Commane - Trainee IWS Instructor. Front; (LtoR) Leo Mahon - IWS Examiner Elizabeth Tivnan - IWS Instructor, Philip Keleghan - IWS Examiner, Emily O'Gorman - Trainee Instructor, Lisa Mullaly - Trainee IWS Instructor.



A stalworth of swimming and land based education delivery, Nick Corish, aged 91 has been captivating audiences both in and out of the water since his late teens. His drive to deliver the skills and knowledge necessary to stay safe continues to this day, in this case to a group in Cahore, Co Wexford.

## Fond memory of Una Begley

IWS LOUTH



Louth Water Safety handing a cheque to Hospice (Majella is secretary and she was in tears talking about it so it'll mean alot to Louth).

We held a coffee morning during our Water Safety Summer week in Gyles Quay in memory of a loved member of Louth Irish Water Safety, Una Begley, who passed away two years ago, Una Begley. Many hands were on deck to help out on the day. For many years, Una was a big part of our Louth Water Safety Family.

All of us in Louth have very fond memories of countless cups of tea on the beach with Una during water safety weeks and our many trips around Ireland with the Louth Surf Team. The morning was a bit emotional for all us mothers who enjoyed many years of Una's company but we got through it was a smile and a wee tear.

What a wonderful morning we had and to raise €1,070 euro for the North Louth Hospice was more than we could ever have imagined. Una's husband Padraig and family members came along for a cuppa and a chat. We all feel privileged to have known Una and we are equally lucky to have memories that will last forever.





# Irish Water Safety Sports Person of the Year Awards

IWS Awards

**Lily Barrett**, aged 18 from County Clare had a phenomenal year in surf lifesaving this year being crowned European Junior Iron woman and Board Champion at the European Junior Surf Lifesaving Championships in Spain in September of this year. This talented athlete anchored a superb Irish Girls team to win the European Beach competition overall and coming 3rd place with the pool and beach combined.

Lily teamed up with Roisin Cahill, Clare to win gold in the Board Rescue and the Junior Girls team also won the taplin relay with Lily on the board, Roisin on the ski, Emer Kelly, Wicklow swimming and Denise Bolger, Wexford on the run leg. Lily also showed her strength on the sand picking up a silver medal with Emer, Denise and Emma O'Brien from Wicklow in the 4.90m sprint relay just behind a strong French side. Not just a beach athlete Lily also qualified for the final of the 200m super lifesaver event in the pool as well as picking up valuable points in the relay events.

At the European Senior Lifesaving Championships in Wales in August Lily showed how good Irish lifesaving is when she picked up a silver medal in the board rescue with team mate Roisin Cahill. These two girls, both juniors had a fantastic race and fought to the line with current World Senior silver medalists from France. Lily also had superb races in the swim, board and iron with 3 top 10 finishes in Europe.

Lily is an outstanding athlete winning her first National title at age 12 representing county Clare, following this up with her first international medal at age 15 in the European Junior run swim run in Sweden, she is now one to watch on the European and World stage.

**Bernard Cahill** was one to watch at the European Senior Lifesaving Championships in Aberystwyth, Wales in August of this year being crowned European Senior Surf Race Champion.



Bernard won international lifesaving medal, bronze in the board rescue with Dylan Barrett at the European Junior Championships when he was 15 and he hasn't stopped winning National and international medals since.

This year he won gold in the surf race at the European Senior Lifesaving Championships in a superbly competitive field of international lifesaving super stars. He followed this with silver in the iron man event, silver in the board race and a bronze in the SERC (Simulated Emergency Rescue Competition).

Bernard also picked up gold at the National Lifesaving Championships in September this year in the swim, board, iron man, ski and board rescue, setting a super high standard for the other athletes.

Bernard who trains in Limerick with the Swim Ireland high performance team is also the National Senior 400m Short Course Champion with a time of 3.50.6. He has also just won an impressive 9 Munster Gold's at the Munster SC Championships last month.

A fantastic, dedicated athlete Bernard is now looking forward to the World Lifesaving Championships in Holland in 2016 where he hopes to show the World lifesaving super stars just how good he is.



# Team Ireland girls crowned European Beach Champions

Alicante, Spain

Ireland's top Lifesavers are bringing home a total of 31 medals and have been crowned European Female Junior Beach Champions in the European Junior & Masters Lifesaving Championships in Torrevieja, Alicante, Spain (23 - 27 Sept, 2015).

The Championships simulate real-life rescue situations that Lifeguards can expect to encounter and pits the best Junior and Masters Lifesavers from around Europe against each other in a series of gruelling water rescue scenarios in both pool and beach environments.

Having dominated the beach competition, Team Ireland's female juniors secured 1st place in the Beach competition and 2nd place when combined with the pool results.

**The Boys and Girls Beach teams combined finished 3rd overall in Europe.**

This gave the Junior Girls and Boys Teams a 6th place overall in Europe with a total tally of 31 medals (pool and beach combined).

"We are absolutely over the moon", said competitor Triona McMenamin, "never before has Team Ireland performed like this at an international competition. People are coming up to us from all the competing countries saying how well we have done. We heard the National Anthem so many times it's unbelievable!"

"These are outstanding results", commented the Chairman of Irish Water Safety's Sports Commission Seamus O'Neill, "every single person had excellent performances and races over the past two days of competition."

The junior competitors will soon become top Lifeguards, patrolling beaches and pools in Ireland and abroad. No other sport gives so much back to a community in terms of a skill that benefits so many users of our wonderful waterways.

This has been an outstanding performance by all athletes and with a tally of 31 medals, is the best result ever by any Irish team at an international competition. I extend my congratulations to the backgroundstaff, parents and coaches for all their preparatory work."

More details results will be posted to our Facebook page specific to sport:

<https://www.facebook.com/SurfLifesavingIreland?fref=ts>

Keep an eye on other activities within IWS at our main Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/IWSie>



## The sport of Lifesaving

1. Life Saving Sport is recognised as an Olympic Category two Sport and it is recognised by the International Olympic Committee and the World Sports Federation.
2. The sport is controlled by International Lifesaving (ILS) Sport and this organisation is recognised by IOC as the controlling body for the sport worldwide. There are over one hundred countries registered as members of ILS.
3. Within Europe the sport is controlled by International Lifesaving Sport Europe a subsidiary body of ILS.
4. Irish Water Safety is recognised by both bodies as the National Governing Body for the sport in Ireland.
5. Irish Water Safety has organised the sport in Ireland since 1946. His Excellency President Sean T. O'Ceallaigh presented the Presidents Award to IWS in 1950 for competition between the counties of Ireland and it is competed for every year since then.
6. ILS, ILSE and IWS all subscribe to WADA.
7. The sport holds European and World Championships in addition to National Championships,
8. A Sports Commission manages the sport within IWS. Participation in competitions has been part funded by Irish Sports Council and IWS funding.
9. Life Saving Sport is quite distinct in that the disciplines in which people compete are directly related to elements of lifeguarding.



# A busy year for Clare's Lifesaving Training

IWS Clare

The Water Safety contingent in Clare have had another very busy year. We have worked very hard over the while to continue having a strong area committee and to fundraise through a number of different avenues to build the Lifesaving Centre. A synopsis of events in a variety of areas organised by our committee are given in the following paragraphs.

## Lifesaving Training Centre

Our new Lifesaving Training Centre has been well used since it was opened by Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland in March. It has facilitated the lifeguards during their summer season, local scouts group for their weekly meetings, the National Water Safety Development Officer's meeting, a visit from the Danish Lifeguard Federation to learn more about our systems and the safety systems of the local big wave surfers – Irish Tow Surf Rescue Club. One of the largest summer weeks in the county is held in White Strand each year, and to have the building to shelter us and provide audio-visual equipment for basic life support was a real treat. In addition, we also ran an instructors course, a beach lifeguard course and three BLG revalidations as fundraisers for our area committee at the building. In May, we welcomed students from Miltown National School with their teachers for a tour of the facilities and a for some fun water safety activities. Of course having all the equipment for surf lifesaving located at the beach was a huge bonus for training over a hundred children at least twice a week during the summer months. A number of people have been so helpful being at the end of a phone to deal with small issues that arise with any new building – many thanks to you all.

## Rescue boat

In addition to the numerous drivers and crew we have trained over the past ten years under the expert tuition of 'Powercraft Wales', we now have 3 drivers qualified under the new syllabus being run by IWS. Our IRB was used to examine some of our coastal water safety weeks and in the running of Irish trials and National competitions for the sport of Lifesaving. Huge thanks go to the hardy people who drive and crew on these occasions.

## Water Safety weeks

As always, we rely heavily on local organisers at our various outdoor locations where we run very busy water safety weeks. The weather was horrendous in some places but instructors and children always managed to keep going in the rain and wind! All involved continue to maintain a very high standard in the provision

Bernard Cahill with the group of lifeguards from Denmark



Ann Downes, instructor and Tanya Carroll, examiner, about to head out to Kerins Hole in White Strand with one of the Rescue classes in July

of the skills needed at each award. Credit must go to everyone involved in running these weeks in Ballyvaughan, Doonbeg, Ennis pool, Flagmount, Lahinch pool, Miltown, Mountshannon, Kilkee, Kilrush and Shannon pool.

## Competitions

Competitive lifesaving continues to grow in the county with 148 competitors from 8 to 58 years competing this past year. Our nipper team came second in the Munster and National competitions. Our Juniors did very well individually, but with small numbers in this section, we did not feature on the podium for team results. However, internationally, with five Clare people on the Irish team, as well as the manager and coach, we featured strongly. Three Clare competitors, having honed their skills over the years are now European Champions. Four senior Clare competitors made up a strong part of the National team that competed in Wales with a senior European champion and newly crowned masters champion now in our midst. All these results and individuals feature elsewhere in the magazine. At our Nationals held in Spanish Point in September, our Men's and Women's teams regained their respective trophies and the women were delighted to tally enough points to gain the coveted President's trophy again. Massive thanks to everyone who contributes to this area of water safety – competitors, parents, helpers, coaches, and referees.





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# Action from the... National Beach



Left: Clare Water Safety receiving the overall trophy for Ladies Beach Rescue were (L/R) Britney Heagney, Katie Shannon with Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Norma Cahill, Lily Barrett and Roisin Cahill of Clare Water Safety.

Below: The start of the Men's Ski Rescue event Water Safety at the annual IWS Surf Rescue Championships in Spanish Point. Over 150 lifeguards from eleven counties competed in 21 events that saw Co. Clare emerge overall winners.

Below: Rachel O'Brien carrying Aoife Deane with Aoibheann Hogan in the Tube Rescue event while competing for Clare Water Safety at the annual IWS Surf Rescue Championships in Spanish Point.

Below Right: Odhran Savage from Waterford Water Safety at the annual IWS Surf Rescue Championships in Spanish Point.





# Rescue Championships

Spanish Point, Co Clare



Left: Kilkenny Water Safety receiving the overall trophy for Best Inland County for (L/R) Deborah Foley, Lisa Power with Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Gary Knox, Caroline Keane, Catherine Nolan and Catherine Costigan; front row: Michael Gall, Peter Funchion and Patrick Griffin all representing Kilkenny.

Centre Left: Caimin Crowley from Cork Water Safety competing in the Ski event at the annual IWS Surf Rescue Championships in Spanish Point.



Above: Catherine Costigan from Kilkenny Water Safety and Aimee Walsh from Galway Water Safety competing in the IWS Surf Rescue Championships at Spanish Point.



Left: Niall McCarra from Galway Water Safety competing in the IWS Surf Rescue Championships at Spanish Point.

(Photos: David Branigan/Oceansport)



# Report from Land PAWS

## Erris, North Mayo

IWS Mayo

My name is Michelle Healy, from Belmullet, Co. Mayo and I have been a Water Safety Instructor in Mayo for the last 15 years.

Through the Mayo WSAC, I have been visiting national schools in the Erris area of North Mayo, introducing the IWS Land PAWS Programme to children from infants up to 6th class. In 2014 I successfully covered 16 schools resulting in the issue of 310 Land PAWS 1 Certificates and 430 Land PAWS 2 Certificates.

In Oct./Nov. 2015, I wanted to introduce Land PAWS 3 and I concentrated on the senior, 3rd – 6th classes.

Due to time constraints and the limited attention span of the participants, I found that the best way to cover all the important points and keep the students focused, was to give them worksheets to complete. The answers were filled in as we went along and they added additional information as the various water safety topics were being discussed.

The worksheets allowed me to interact with the children and made the learning fun. It also provided an opportunity for the students to think, discuss their answers with each other and compare them to everyday activities and situations they may have been involved in or of which they had some knowledge.

When most of the theory work was done we progressed to some practical work. After I explained all the rescue techniques, each child demonstrated how to do the rope, the ringbuoy and the reach & rescue. To finish the day the children were broken up into small groups and given a variety of everyday objects e.g. towel, crutch, stick, high vis vest, football etc. They then worked in teams to come up with as many ways as possible, to use the objects as rescue aids.

A total of 185 Land PAWS 3 Certificates will now be issued following this most recent initiative. The feedback from the programme has been fantastic from students, teachers and parents and there has been a noticeable increase in the number of children

attending water safety classes in the regionsince the school PAWS programme began.

I have now been approached by transition year coordinators in the area with a view to doing a similar programme in the local secondary schools. I look forward to continuing this programme and making it a valuable and fun learning experience for all.



Above: IWS Instructor Michelle Healy, delivering Land Paws to children in Shraigh N.S., Pullathomas, Belmullet.



**Follow Uisce Bears advice and use these steps when calling the Emergency Services.**

**Do not panic**  
**Dial 999 or 112**  
**Say what service you require**  
**Give your name**  
**Tell them where you are**  
**Tell them the details of the accident**

**It's as easy as**  
**WATER SAFETY 1. 2. 3.**



# Foróige

IWS Dublin

2015 saw Dublin Water Safety and Foróige Blanchardstown continue to build upon its successful program of swimming lessons and water safety introduction to various projects from around the Blanchardstown area. This is the 5th year of this partnership originally set up by Aisling Cushen and Foróige. The programme started out with just swimming lessons and was provided to a small number of people by one instructor each

year for 1 week. But due to the needs of the young people being determined as urgently needing to learn how to swim Dublin Water Safety are now catering for at least 30 young people each time and the more confident swimmers are now learning about water safety across a number of weeks during the summer and during the Autumn mid-term break.



Initially working with young people from a Garda Youth Diversion Project & following 2 high profile drownings in Blanchardstown in 2014, Dublin Water Safety volunteers now work with young people from various projects from the area ranging in age from 12 to 18 years of age, girls and boys, from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds including Irish, European and African and they are achieving our Seal, Orca and Marlin awards along with our Safety Awards for the more proficient swimmers. For the past 2 years courses have been organised and co-ordinated by Bernie Gaines and a team of Dublin Swimming and Water Safety Instructors.

*Well done to all involved!*

## Liffey Swim Champion 2015

### Donncha O'Siadhail

IWS Meath

Eva Murphy, Kildare, receiving her IWS Instructor Award.



In September, Donncha O'Siadhail, chair of our Meath Water Safety Committee, overcame huge physical adversity to be crowned Liffey Swim Champion 2015. He also holds the Irish Long Course Freestyle record in the 1,500, 800, 400 and 200 metres in his age group. This was accomplished even though Donncha, a teacher in Meath, had suffered a shattered collarbone in July 2014 before winning the 100-year old Liffey Swim Trophy. Donncha continues to volunteer running lifesaving classes in Trim.

Eva Murphy receiving her IWS Instructor Award, presented by Philip Keleghan, IWS Examiner and surrounded by (l to r) Trainee Instructors and Instructors; Dylan Molloy - Trainee Instructor, Catriona Burgess - Trainee Instructor, Lisa Mullaly - Trainee Instructor, Greg Coby - Trainee Instructor, Hugh Logue - Trainee Instructor, Aoife Commane - Trainee Instructor, Sarah Mullaly - Instructor.



# Water Safety Week in Skerries, Co Dublin

By Jim Dwyer IWS Dublin

This year was another good year for Outdoor weeks in Dublin with 436 in Skerries. There were 307 children involved with swimming and challenge awards on the beach and 129 children involved with Safety and Rescue awards at the Springers. This has been the largest number of participants to date for water safety in Skerries. Swimming classes for children from 4 to

11 years took place on the South/North Beach each day. The Skerries water safety week is from Monday to Friday on the beach with exams on the Friday and from Monday to Saturday for the Springboards with exams on the Saturday. Despite a couple of days of bad weather, the children enjoying learning to swim and learning about water safety in an open water environment.



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The Skerries beach team including Examiners consisted of (next page, bottom right) (Back Row L/r) Liz O'Reilly, Rachel McLoughlin, Liam Taylor, Niamh Devereux, Aidan Byrne, Seán Fleming, Paul Hayes, Darina Byrne, Gráinne Ward, Bernie Gaines, Máire Jones, Edel McCarthy, Peter Wilson, Rachel Harrington; (Front L/R) Oisín Dwyer, Ciara Woodlock, Siofra Collins O'Regan, Leo Cooke, Robert McKey.

Children from the age of 12 years and older did practical and theory classes in Lifesaving and Basic Life Support. These classes took place at the Springboards for most levels and the Captains for the advanced classes (depending on tides). At the Springboards there were Paul Murphy, Sinead Murphy, Maria Jackson, Viva Ferguson, Muireann Collins O'Regan, Ruth Lennon (Louth WS), and Jim Dwyer with Aisling Cushen, Alma Clancy, Ronnie Horan, Paul Hayes, Bernie Gaines and Colin Griffin examining on the Saturday.





# You might need these ladies!

IWS Louth

In July this year Louth Water Safety were invited to take part in the Drogheda Port Maritime Festival, which was a great way for us to make people aware of the hazards of water and how to be safe and responsible around our waterways, both inland and our coastal shores. We had a great amount of help not only from our Instructors and Committee members but also our older participants who were still doing their courses, to help explain what we do and the benefits of it.

We managed to promote Water Safety from our stand as well as we could with flyers, leaflets and discussions both with adults and children. We got children to interact with CPR mannequins and to explain to them that any interaction with a "victim" is of help no matter how insignificant it may look.

We were also asked about helping out at the Boyne Swim, which was also part of the Maritime festival. We had Nipper, Junior and Senior swimmers in the water helping out along with the Boyne



## THE DIARY

Hubert Murphy's look at life by the Boyneside and surrounds  
[hmurphy@drogheda-independent.ie](mailto:hmurphy@drogheda-independent.ie) | 041 9876820

### You might need these ladies!

I HAVE always known that the Irish Water Safety group does enormous work, but I got a first hand taste of it recently.

The group organise countless events and do much to not only highlight the dangers with water, but also teach CPR and lifesaving classes.

Lifesavers can learn the art from about 12 years of age and as the ladies told me, they have now progressed into teachers, passing on what they've learned.

Oonagh McKeivitt did a demonstration of CPR, hand in hand with the use of a defibrillator.

They feel the defibs are vital these days

and teaching people how to use them could certainly save a life.

**The group will be very busy shortly as they host water safety week**

The group will be very busy shortly as they host the summer Irish Water Safety week.

It will take place at Clogherhead beach from July 13-18th and will feature all aspects, from swimming to water safety, rescues and CPR. Registration for the week is in the car park in Clogherhead on Monday July 13 at 9.30am. The classes start at 10.30am.

For more information on the week and indeed all aspects of the group's work, contact Brendan/ Frances at 0879435186, 0877690196. Email: [Clogherheadwatersafety@gmail.com](mailto:Clogherheadwatersafety@gmail.com).



Oonagh McKeivitt, with Moire O'Brien and Mary Harvey.

Fisherman Rescue crews and Drogheda Kayak club. We got fantastic feedback from one of the Boyne Swim organisers, Sue McKinney,

"On behalf of the Boyne swim can I say a big thank you and your crew. It was a total pleasure to work with life savers and have them support us during the swim. It was noted from the by standers that I talked to that not only did they look well in the water they also knew what distance to be from the swimmers, keeping themselves away from danger, but close enough to get to someone quickly should they require it. And as I said to you they are a credit to Co. Louth."





# Eight year old's vigilance saves life in swimming pool...

IWS Wexford

On the 23rd of December 2014, at a swimming pool in Arklow, Deirbhile aged 8, alerted her father Martin Gavaghan that a boy wasn't moving and was lying on the pool floor. Without hesitation Martin swam down to the boy and lifted his lifeless body to the pool side. Two Leisure assistants began CPR on the child and called emergency services. Garda John O'Brien & Garda Kevin Fitzpatrick (Rescue Appreciations) arrived at the scene and took over the CPR. They continued to work on him for over ten minutes and eventually got a pulse. The Ambulance crew took over and the boy is currently recovering very well.

Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Martin Gavaghan from Arklow with his Seiko Just In Time Award and Garda Kevin Fitzpatrick with his Rescue Appreciation Award.



## Rescue 16

### THE LIFESAVING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS & MEETINGS

The Lifesaving World Championships and meetings – Rescue 2016 – will be held from 1 to 18 September 2016 in the city of Eindhoven and Noordwijk, The Netherlands. Pool and Ocean competitions are on the programme for National Teams, Interclub Teams, Masters, Surfboat teams and IRB Teams.

The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) is the world authority in the global effort to prevent drowning and works with national lifesaving organizations to improve drowning prevention, water safety, water rescue, lifeaving, lifeguarding and lifesaving sport. ILS is a non-profit, non-political, non-religious, worldwide lifesaving sport and humanitarian organisation.

A man, woman or child drowns somewhere in the world every 30 seconds, making a tragedy of more than 1 million people who died by drowning per year. This is an unacceptable and preventable toll and is the driving motivation for the ILS. The International Federation was established in 1910 and is now representing over 30 million lifesavers and lifeguards in over 130 countries. They all have one objective: the preservation of human life in the aquatic environment. Sports competitions are organised under the motto 'fit to save a life'.

## Dr. Ian Mackie, MD

Dr. Ian Mackie, MD was a world renowned water safety expert.

He served as a member of the Australian Resuscitation Council for 14 years representing both Surf Life Saving Australia and the Royal Life Saving Society. He was the National Medical Advisor to Royal Life Saving Society Australia from 1982 until his death in 2002 and of Surf Life Saving Australia from 1976 to 1996.

Dr. Mackie was the first chair of the ILS Medical Committee and published scholarly lifesaving materials for over four decades. He received many awards for his contribution and was well known for his welcoming and inclusive manner. ILS established a Medical Fellowship in honour of Dr. Ian Mackie, MD in order to continue his contribution to the international lifesaving community.

The Fellowship provides young lifesavers and lifeguards with a link to the ILS Medical Committee continuing Dr. Mackie's belief in the importance of the link between medical issues and their practical application by lifesavers and lifeguards.





# International Life Saving Award

Dr Matthew Sills - appointed as the Dr Ian Mackie Fellow of ILS

IWS Awards

The International Life Saving Federation (ILS) comprises of national life saving organisations/federations aiming at improving water safety, drowning prevention, water rescue, lifesaving and lifeguarding and lifesaving sport worldwide. ILS cooperates with partner organisations, governments, non-government organisations (NGOs) and sponsors to promote lifesaving worldwide.

ILS established a Medical Fellowship in honour of Dr. Ian Mackie, MD in order to continue his contribution to the international lifesaving community.

The Fellowship provides young lifesavers and lifeguards with a link to the ILS Medical Committee continuing Dr. Mackie's belief in the importance of the link between medical issues and their practical application by lifesavers and lifeguards.

Irish Water Safety is proud to announce the appointment by ILS of IWS volunteer Dr Matthew Sills as the Dr Ian Mackie Fellow for the next four years. Matthew is a member of Waterford Water Safety, and has competed and coached with Waterford Surf Lifesaving over the past ten years.

Matthew studied medicine in University College Cork, graduating in June 2014. He went on to begin his postgraduate



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Dr Matthew Sills has been appointed as the Dr Ian Mackie Fellow of ILS and received the International Life Saving Award

training, and is currently on the National Training Programme for Emergency Medicine. Matthew holds a keen interest in matters relating to drowning, resuscitation, prehospital and critical care.



## paws.iws.ie

- For Teachers
- For Students
- For Parents

Our Primary Aquatic Water Safety (PAWS) programme aims, through class room lessons and swimming pool instruction, to reduce the numbers of children drowning in Ireland. In this section we provide helpful suggestions on how to keep your child safe around water.

*Water Safety is Fun!*





# Peugeot Awarded Irish Water Safety 'Community & Social Responsibility Award'

Gowan Distributors Limited, Peugeot Importers in Ireland, received a Community & Social Responsibility Award at the annual Irish Water Safety National Awards Ceremony 2015, held at The Printworks Conference Centre at Dublin Castle on 17 November. The Minister of Environment, Community and Local Government, Minister Alan Kelly and Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety, presented the award to Gowan Distributors in recognition of the company's support towards the purchase of and sign writing on a new Peugeot Boxer van for Irish Water Safety.

The Peugeot Boxer van is today used by Irish Water Safety volunteers to transport necessary equipment for lifesaving sport competitions both in Ireland and abroad and to exhibitions around the country. The vibrant Irish Water Safety signage on the vehicle, delivers key messages to the passing public about how to stay safe in and around water and draws attention to Irish Water Safety courses available and the charity's social media channels, as the vehicle travels around the country.

Speaking at the awards ceremony, Breda Collins said, "The new Peugeot Boxer van will mobilise the resources required to run Irish Water Safety lifesaving sport events and additional drowning prevention campaigns nationwide. The additional sponsorship of water safety messages on the vehicle will further help to prevent tragic drownings and raise public awareness of best practices when visiting our aquatic



Simon McGarrigle of the IWS Sports Commission with Emma Toner, Marketing Manager of Peugeot Ireland, Breda Collins Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Seamus O'Neill, Chairman of Irish Water Safety's Sports Commission at the presentation of a Peugeot van to IWS.

environments. We are deeply grateful to Gowan Distributors for helping us to raise awareness and reduce drownings."

## Water Safety Week in Skerries

IWS Dublin







# Irish Water Safety 'Volunteer of the Year Award' Ms Joan Morton

Wicklow native, Joan, was reared on a family tradition of sea swimming, a tradition she passed on to her children, thus getting involved with her local water safety area committee. She began her tenure assisting IWS instructor Pam Beacon during the summer water safety weeks. She encouraged a number of other mothers from the Wicklow area to enrol in lifesaving classes, and supported their progression to the role of instructor.

Joan has been instrumental in running the water safety weeks in Wicklow and at Wicklow pool, since it's opening in 2002. Joan first joined the area committee as a local organiser in 1987, holding a number of the integral positions since that date; including instructor, examiner, surf lifesaving team manager, local organiser, fundraiser, PRO and Vice Chair; and international referee and sports commission member within the wider spectrum of the organisation.

With the advent of surf lifesaving, Joan saw the opportunity to develop Wicklow's participation, due to a strong core of sea swimmers in the area. From the early 1990's, she became involved in developing and coaching teams of surf lifesavers in Wicklow. With Joan's strong leadership, Wicklow were able to host the 2nd National surf lifesaving championships, an event they have hosted on many occasions since.

In early 2000, Joan set up Wicklow Surf Lifesaving Club and through sponsorship and fundraising raised €30,000 to bring Wicklow surf lifesaving teams to the world championships in Australia. They



Breda Collins, Chairman of Irish Water Safety and Alan Kelly T.D., Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government presenting Joan Morton from Wicklow with her Volunteer of the Year Award.

were duly rewarded, with the team bringing home several medals for Ireland. Joan is also involved in developing the Nipper and Junior element of surf lifesaving over the years.

It is Joan's passion & endless drive for everything she does in Water Safety, from lifesaving classes in the pool and on the beach, to school visits, and surf lifesaving, that she has been selected for the volunteer of the year award. Congratulations Joan.

## Water Safety Week in Youghal

IWS Cork





# Monaghan Water Safety Summer Activities

IWS Monaghan

## Volunteering doesn't always have to take place at the water's edge!

When the hugely successful winter term of classes in Monaghan Leisure Complex ended at the end of May with over 170 participants each week, Monaghan Water Safety Area Committee focused their attention to their summer activities.



Susan Lamhna & Kathleen O'Hanlon, Church gate collection.

To help promote Water Safety Awareness Week, local schools in Monaghan were visited by Committee Members and with the kind assistance of Seán McCaffrey (Northern Sound Radio Presenter) and the pupils of St Patrick's NS Clara, a 'Water Safety Tip of the Day' was broadcast throughout the Northern Sound region (Cavan & Monaghan) and worldwide on the Northern Sound App. Interviews were also conducted through Irish with BBC Radio Ulster on various aspects of water safety.

A competition was also organised through the Northern Standard newspaper for a 3-month family membership of Monaghan Leisure

Complex (which they kindly sponsored) and a free term of Water Safety Classes.

July saw our annual Church Gate Collection in the parishes of Tydavnet and Monaghan & Rackwallace and was generously supported by parishioners. It was also an opportunity for our second set of volunteers (our non-deck based volunteers) to assist with our annual fundraising efforts. Examiners from Monaghan also assisted with exams in neighbouring Co Cavan covering lakes in Shercock, Arva, Cootehill and Bawnboy.



Charlene Sherry & Fiona Lynch in Monaghan Shopping Centre.

August is traditionally the month for Agricultural Shows in Monaghan and Monaghan Water Safety was represented at the two major shows – Castleblayney and Tydavnet -where local farmers and members of the public were educated on water safety in the home and water safety around the farmyard.

Building on the success of last year's Water Safety course in Lough Muckno, Castleblayney, we extend our congratulations to those who achieved their Safety 1,2,3,4 exams during the first week in August. Traditionally, the last weekend in August, sees the Monaghan Water Safety Committee man a stand in Monaghan Shopping Centre to provide information on the winter schedule of classes to the general public. This was hugely successful initiative and we are grateful to the kind assistance of Monaghan Shopping Centre for allowing us use of the Centre.

Monaghan Water Safety- Water Safety Awareness Week Competition Winners





# Curracloe Swim Week 2015

IWS Wexford



## Photos:

1. Examiner Ruairi Farrell presenting the perpetual trophy to Curracloe Swimmer of the year to Daniel Furlong with Uisce Bear.
2. Instructor Mary OLeary Curracloe Swim Week 2015 Seal 2 class.
3. Pool Training.
- 4 / 5. Wexford Trainee Instructor Neil Beaver teaching classes using the panels at Curracloe Swim Week 2015.
6. Twins Anya and Olya Gilbert with Uisce Bear at Curracloe Swim Week Certs Presentation.



# Bunclody Traveller Women in Water Safety

By Thelma Blehein IWS Wexford

## Wexford Water Safety and the Bunclody Traveller Family Support Project.

Swimming and Water Safety has become an annual part of the work of the Bunclody Traveller Family Support Project in realising values of equality, autonomy and social justice.

In 2011 the local Traveller Women's Group who worked together all through the winter months doing communications, child development, health and well being and a range of other activities, decided that as a reward for all their hard work they would take a week in June to learn to swim properly. This week happened four years ago in the Bunclody Outdoor Swimming pool. Conversations before and after the swimming lessons lead to a look at how and where local Travellers learn to swim, how they use the local water ways and rivers and also how some increased awareness and knowledge on water safety could lower the risks for them as a community, while improving their enjoyment and use of water based activity.

The following summer and each summer since a number of the women have taken part in water safety and basic life support classes. Many of the waterways Travellers use in the locality are un-lifeguarded. Rivers and tributaries as well as beaches are all venues that pose water safety risks. Finding a safe place to picnic and swim along a river bank, learning to know what or where a rip current is on a beach, treading water when you get out of your depth, or how to deal with a child if they swallow or choke on water are all risk reducing pieces of knowledge and are directly relevant to Traveller lifestyle and culture in the Bunclody area.

Learning Basic Life support has seen a growth in confidence amongst the women in responding to issues of basic first aid and taking preventative actions, such as hydration and the use of sun creams, hats and tee-shirts on hot days. Their interest is always to learn more and with this the possibilities of gaining qualifications as swim teacher or instructor become more real with each step. There is an ambition for participation and inclusivity in this low cost, high impact, but fun activity.



Left to right is Mary Cash, Josephine Connors, Celine Cash & Sally Murphy. Missing from the photo is Ally Connors.

The Bunclody Traveller Family Support Project has an overall purpose in promoting equality not just in participation but of outcome. The impacts of increased knowledge on swimming and water safety amongst the local Traveller Women includes improved child and family safety on outings to rivers and beaches, increased physical fitness, stress release, and a space to think about healthier lifestyles in a fun way.

*"I can't tell you how much I look forward to this – it's the best thing about the summer"*

Celine Cash

Having got to Safety 4 participants look forward to gaining further awards while all the while encouraging their children and families to take part and become better swimmers with great awareness of water safety.

Learning to swim & learning water safety is important for everyone, including Travellers. Values of autonomy & social justice if realised over time can add up to improved equality of outcome both in water safety and in life.



## Irish Water Safety

.. every person a swimmer... every person a lifesaver....



# Body Recovery

## Calculating resurfacing times for a drowned victim

By Dr. Patrick Buck WATER SAFETY 4 ALL

Sub surface body recovery is complex, expensive, often unsuccessful and carries an element of risk for all involved. While it is typically undertaken to facilitate incident closure the task is rarely straightforward. It requires a thorough understanding of the hydrodynamics, incident timeline and the environment in which the drowning occurred. Without these data body recovery may prove unsuccessful and occur only after the body has resurfaced.

The time it takes for a human body to resurface after drowning is a combination of physics and biology. While it is somewhat of an inexact science knowledge of its mechanics may assist SAR personnel in body recovery operations. Without some form of floatation device the majority of drowned victims will sink, a factor of negative buoyancy. The range of negative buoyancy for most submerged drowned adults is in the region of 2.5 kg to 6 kg. On occasion, a body with excessive fat deposits or who was wearing some form of buoyant clothing may float. Victim's dead prior to entry into the water will usually remain afloat unless suffering penetrative (torso) or catastrophic injuries.

A drowned victim will assume a pseudo foetal position when underwater.

Once submerged a body will start to decompose (putrefaction), with the rate of decomposition a factor of water temperature, stomach content, medications if present etc. A submerged body in water below 4°C or at depths in excess of 30 metres is unlikely to resurface due to the very low rate of decomposition and associated gas production and other factors including pressure differentials. Predation at depth may lead to a complete breakdown of body tissue. Generally a body will stay underwater until the gases produced by decomposition in the torso (principally hydrogen sulphide, carbon dioxide and methane) produce enough lift (positive buoyancy) to raise the corpse to the surface.

A body is most likely to resurface in a horizontal facedown position with legs and arms hanging down, which in turn stabilises the facedown position. Lividity, the pooling of body fluids on the underside, will further contribute to stabilisation. Children, and on occasion small adults, due to their body morphology, may float face-up.

On resurfacing the built up gases will invariably escape over time, causing the body to once again sink. The duration of time that a body will remain afloat is difficult to calculate and will be influenced by such conditions as water state, body integrity and predation. Float time can be a matter of hours to days.

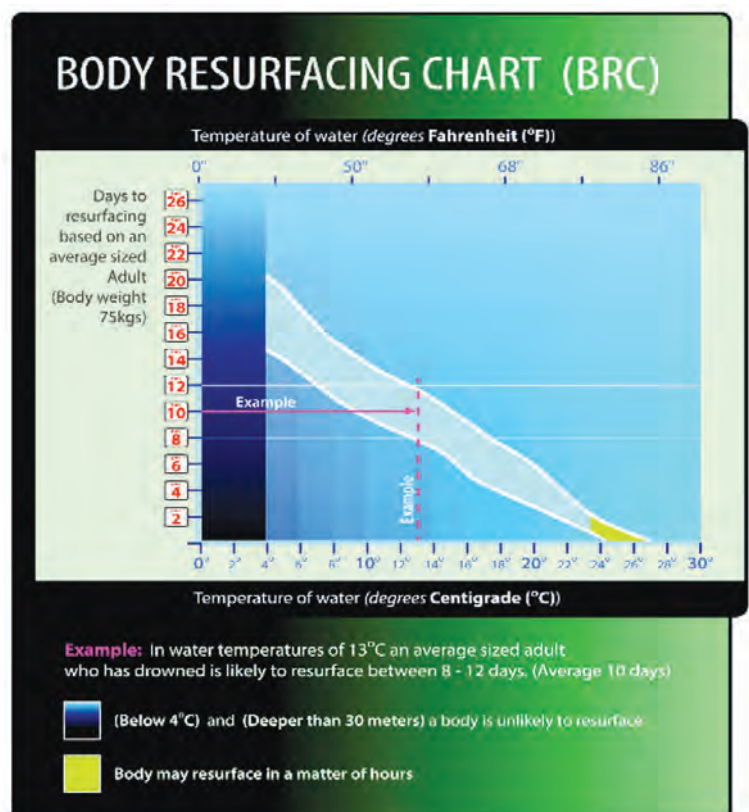
The subsurface decomposition and ingress of water into the tissues will continue which may cause the body to once again resurface providing that the body is more or less intact. The degree of decomposition on what is often termed a 'refloat' will be advanced and the body may present either face-up or facedown. Considerable care must be taken by the recovery team in retrieving 'refloats' due to the body's advanced state of decomposition.

While there are many variables that effect resurfacing times it is possible to estimate approximate resurfacing times in average conditions for the average sized person. The Body Resurfacing Chart (BRC) can be used to calculate probable resurfacing times.

Other factors that influence whether a body will resurface and the time that it takes to resurface are:

- 1 Entrapment - rocks, boat, netting etc.
- 2 Clothing on entry into the water.
- 3 Body morphology and body condition/integrity.
- 4 Self-harm/foul play – body weighted down etc.
- 5 Stomach content – refined carbohydrates and sugars produce gases at a faster rate

In conclusion the BRC used in conjunction with local knowledge and tidal and weather parameters offers SAR personnel an additional tool in water based body recovery operations.





# PAWS 2015

By Oisín Foden, National Education Development Officer

In 2015 there has been a very good uptake in the PAWS certificate website, with primary schools using it to order their PAWS certificates directly from Irish Water Safety Head Quarters. Our new online tutorial videos have also been well received and are being used around the country to teach Land PAWS to primary school children. Cork, helped by Caroline Casey, in her role as Water Safety Development Officer has seen a positive increase in the number of schools participating in the PAWS programme.

Irish water Safety has a great volunteer base that has helped in our PAWS drive over the last two years. To date in 2015 Irish Water Safety Volunteers have providing training to 17,684 primary school children, through our PAWS drive. I would like to thank each of the volunteers for giving up their time to help with this project.

## Breakdown of PAWS certificates in 2015

Land Paws 1	5227
Land Paws 2	2006
Land Paws 3	1523
<b>Land Paws Total</b>	<b>8756</b>
PAWS 1	2071
PAWS 2	2984
PAWS 3	5823
PAWS 4	6931
PAWS 5	5291
PAWS 6	3617
PAWS 7	1902
PAWS 8	1474
<b>Total PAWS</b>	<b>30093</b>
<b>Combined PAWS</b>	<b>38846</b>



Below: Students from 5th and 6th class at Durniy National School, Loughrea, Co Galway receive instructions in ringbuoy throwing techniques.





# Drowning Data

## Harnessing the little details to safeguard many

By Roger Sweeney

Irish Water Safety, in collaboration with the RNLI, and the National University of Ireland, Galway recently launched a new initiative to improve access to data on drowning in Ireland. This data, ultimately, will inform our prevention and response activities so that drownings and aquatic injuries can be prevented.

As part of this work, Irish Water Safety extended an invitation to a range of drowning data stakeholders – both data users and data providers – to further develop drowning data taxonomies (classifications).

The event was held on Friday, November 27th 2015, at the NUI Galway campus where the knowledge and perspectives of those present were combined to identify the various drowning data sets that need to be captured for use in prevention campaigns by Irish Water Safety, the RNLI, the Irish Coast Guard, research students, the media and a range of other organisations

and individuals with an interest in analysing drowning data and developing campaigns that target specific at-risk groups.

We average 135 drownings in Ireland every year. There is no one entity that can provide all the answers to preventing such tragedies but by working together, we can influence behaviours and attitudes with campaigns that specifically target those individuals most at risk.



L-R: Back Row: Roger Sweeney, Irish Water Safety; Dr Patrick Buck, Water Safety 4 All; Dani Dix, RNLI; John O'Connor, Central Statistics Office; Michael Gavin, Water Safety Development Officer Mayo; Caroline Walsh, An Garda Síochána; Kevin Rahill, RNLI; Sarah Summerville, NUIG.

Front Row: Declan Geoghegan, Irish Coast Guard; Martin O'Halloran, Health & Safety Authority; Brendan Donohue & John Connolly, Lifesaving Foundation; Dr Áine McNamara, HSE; Clare McGrath, Chairperson of Swim Ireland & volunteer with Irish Water Safety; Joe Moore, RNLI; Derek Flanagan, Irish Coastguard; Aoife Kervick & Kiran Sarma, School of Psychology, National University of Ireland, Galway.

# Irish Water Safety Comm\_nity

## all that's missing is U

We all belong to a community at risk of drowning and it happens to eleven people every month. Think about the people you interact with and the chances are that someone similar to your social group perished because they did not have the knowledge to save themselves from drowning - friends and family enjoying waterside walks falling unexpectedly into water; absence of parental supervision; overestimation of skills; underestimation of ability - there are dozens of reasons for drownings.

If you'd like to help save lives in your community, take the first step and volunteer with your local Water Safety Area Committee by joining at [www.iws.ie](http://www.iws.ie).

If you are a schoolteacher, you'll soon be hectic with a New Year's audience of pupils. Be your school's community volunteer and certify the children in your care with essential water safety knowledge in time for the summer season ahead.

Irish Water Safety Comm\_nity Vol\_ntees - all that's missing is U.





# World Conference on Drowning Prevention 2015

By Roger Sweeney BRIDGING COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT DROWNING

The International Life Saving (ILS) World Conference on Drowning Prevention (WCDP) is one of the most important events on the calendar of the International Life Saving Federation. The purpose of this global conference is to bring together the world's foremost experts, research, systems and information on drowning prevention, rescue, lifesaving and water safety for exchange, debate and further development that will lead to a reduction of death and injury in all aquatic environments worldwide.

The first ILS World Conference on Drowning Prevention took place in San Diego, USA in 1997. It was organised by the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) under the guidance of its President B. Chris Brewster. The Conference was called "World Medical & Rescue Conference". The second ILS World Conference took place in Porto, Portugal in 2007. It was organised by ASNASA in collaboration with ISN. The Conference was called "World Water Safety Conference". The third ILS World Conference took place in Da Nang, Vietnam in 2011. It was organised by the Royal Life Saving Society, Australia under the guidance of Justin Scarr (RLSS, Australia). The fourth ILS World Conference took place in Potsdam, Germany in 2013. It was organised by the German Life Saving Federation (DLRG) under the guidance of its President, Dr. Klaus Wilkens PhD. Papers were presented by Irish Water Safety's Martin O'Sullivan, Brendan McGrath, Seamus O'Neill, John Leech and Roger Sweeney.

The 2015 ILS World Conference on Drowning Prevention took place in Penang, Malaysia in November. The following papers were presented by Irish Water Safety:

Martin O'Sullivan, Vice-Chair of IWS and Chairman of the IWS Technical Commission:

- *Public Rescue Equipment and the Chain of Survival*

John Leech, CEO of IWS:

*Primary Aquatics Water Safety (PAWS) Programme*

- *How Ireland is tackling drowning in the nation's most hazardous workplace – the Commercial fishing sector*

Roger Sweeney, Marketing Manager and Deputy CEO of IWS and Chairman of the Marketing Commission:

- *Maximizing media coverage - practical tips to get your water safety message promoted by the media*
- *Marketing as an educational tool - an Irish Water Safety perspective*

At the event, the ILS President Mr Graham Ford announced the co-sponsorship of the conference by the World Health Organization (WHO). This was the first time that the global drowning prevention community met since the publication by WHO of the "Global report on drowning: preventing a leading killer" in November 2014.

The Global report on drowning, which was the first report by WHO dedicated exclusively to drowning, revealed that drowning

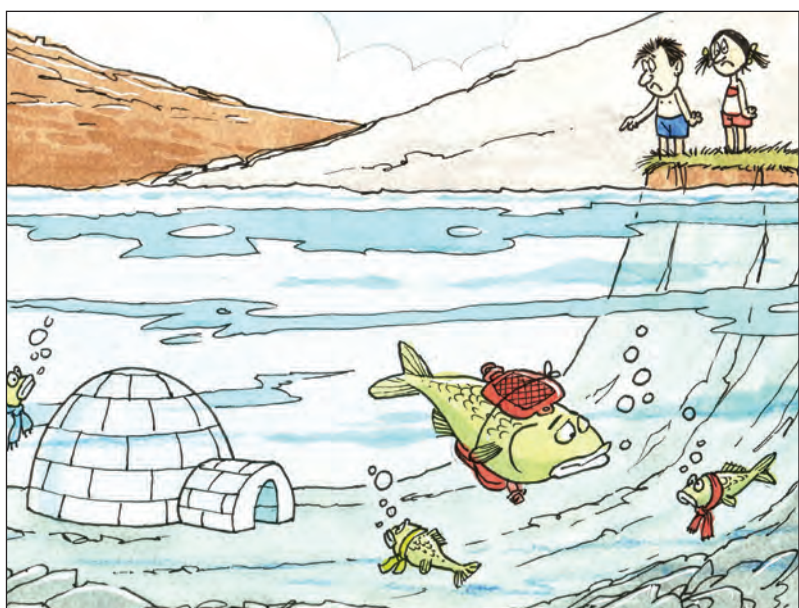
claims the lives of 372,000 people each year and is among the ten leading causes of death for children and young people in every region. Globally, over half of all drowning deaths are among those aged under 25 years.

"More than 90% of drowning occurs in low- and middle-income countries, with nations in the African, South-East Asia and Western Pacific regions having the highest rates. Children 1-4 years of age are particularly vulnerable to drowning," said Dr David Meddings of the WHO Department for Management of NCDs, Disability, Violence and Injury Prevention. "This loss of life is largely preventable through actions described in the Global report on drowning."

"The co-sponsorship of this conference by WHO marks a significant step in the joint efforts by ILS and WHO to raise global, regional and national awareness of drowning and its prevention," said Justin Scarr, ILS Drowning Prevention Commission Chair.

The key themes arising from the Global report on drowning were explored during plenary sessions, symposia and parallel session papers delivered by over 200 presenters from 50 nations. Symposia investigating the use of lifejackets, child drowning prevention measures, identifying and responding to drowning data gaps, and CPR protocols were just some of the issues that featured at the event.

The conference themes and further information is available at [www.wcdp2015.org](http://www.wcdp2015.org).



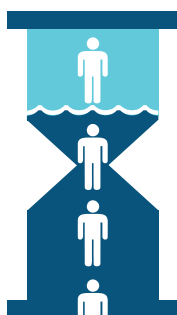
*Cold water in lakes can be dangerous - it is often much colder beneath the surface than you think... see lots more cartoons at [www.facebook.com/IWSie](http://www.facebook.com/IWSie)*

# DROWNING

in the WHO European Region

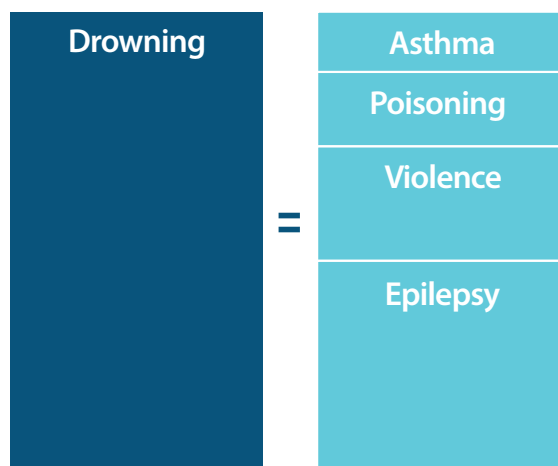
An average of

**3.5**



people  
drown  
every  
hour

Drowning is the  
**second leading cause of death**  
among 5–14-year-olds



**5 times**

as many  
**males** as  
**females** die  
from drowning



## 10 ACTIONS TO PREVENT DROWNING

1



Install barriers  
controlling access to  
water

2



Provide safe places away  
from water for pre-school  
children

3



Teach children basic  
swimming, water safety  
and safe rescue skills

4



Train people in safe  
rescue and resuscitation

5



Strengthen public  
awareness and highlight  
the vulnerability of children



Set and enforce safe  
boating, shipping and  
ferry regulations

6



Improve flood risk  
management locally and  
nationally

7



Coordinate drowning  
prevention efforts with  
other sectors

8



Develop a national  
water safety plan

9



Address priority  
research questions with  
well-designed studies

10



# 6 children drowned in 2014

Remember your ABC to child safety...



**Always Supervise**



**Be aware of the dangers**



**Click [www.iws.ie](http://www.iws.ie)**

