

WA DROWNING REPORT 2023

A water loving nation
free from drowning



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



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- Royal Life Saving Society - Australia
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- The National Coronial Information System

Royal Life Saving acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands in which we live and work. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present. We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and recognize their continuing association with the land, waters and sky of this country.

Drowning incidents recorded in WA in 2022/23



✓ Overall drowning rates decreased by 17.0% from 2021/22.

⬆️ Drowning trends show an average increase of 2.1% over past decade

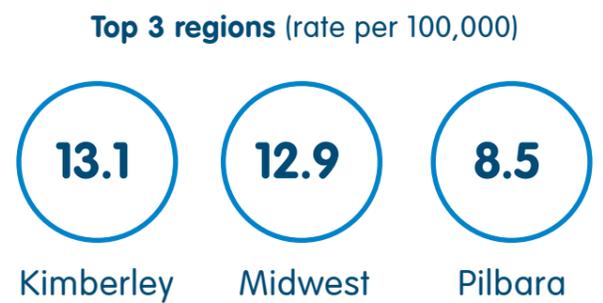
Males were 2.7 times more likely to drown than females



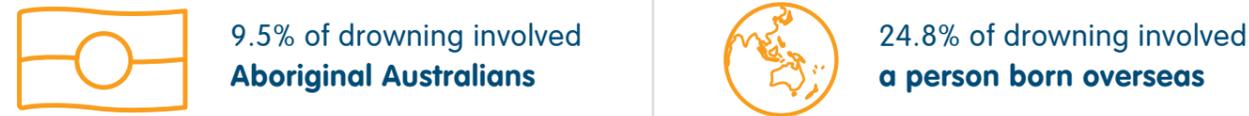
- ✓ Drowning risk was highest amongst toddlers, older adults, and adults.
Rate per 100,000:
- 44.4 Toddlers (0-4 years)
- 4.4 Children (5-14 years)
- 5.1 Young People (15-24 years)
- 5.3 Adults (25-64 years)
- 7.9 Older Adults (65+ years)



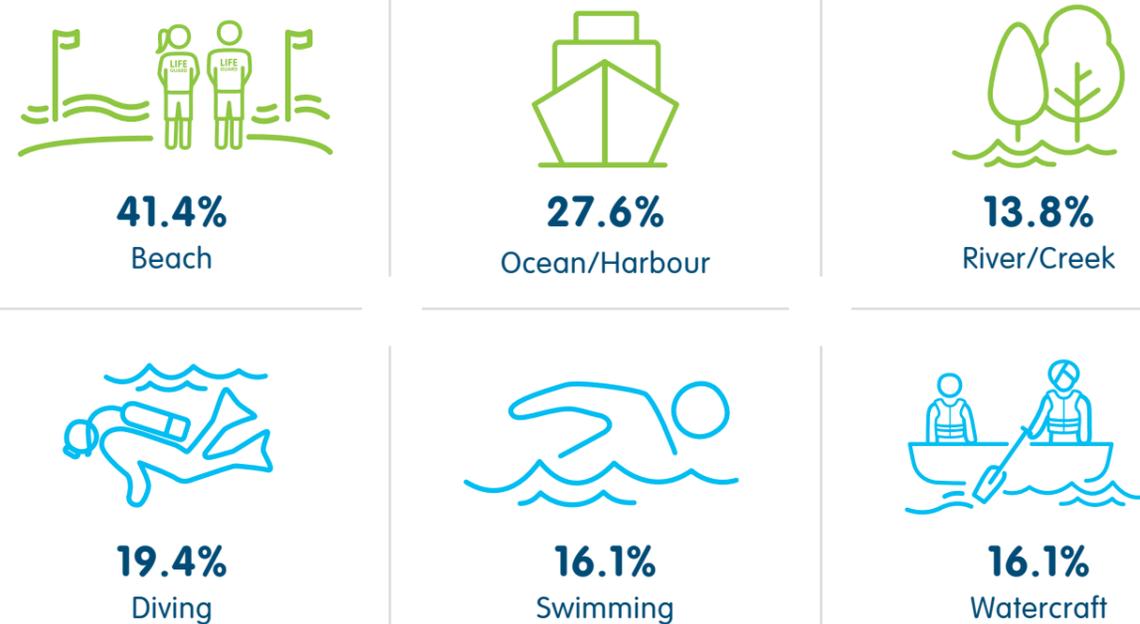
People in **regional WA** were **1.7 times** more likely to be involved in a drowning incident than those in the Perth metropolitan area.



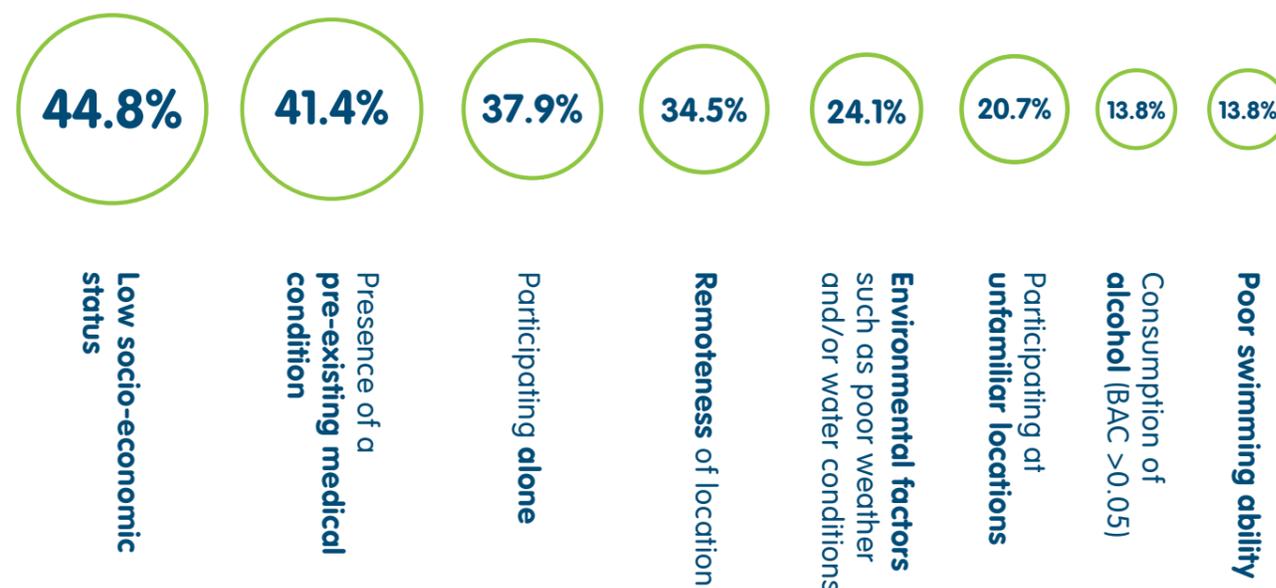
Multicultural communities were over-represented in drowning data



Drowning incidents were most likely to occur at coastal and inland waterways while diving, swimming, or using watercraft.



Key risk factors for drowning:



> DROWNING AT A GLANCE

Drowning has a profound impact on communities, extending far beyond the immediate tragedy of loss. For individuals who survive non-fatal drowning incidents, the long-term consequences can include severe physical and neurological impairments, significantly altering their quality of life. Furthermore, the ripple effect of these incidents can impact local communities, highlighting the necessity for increased awareness and preventive measures.

This report highlights key unintentional drowning trends in Western Australia (WA) from July 2022 to June 2023 and identifies key priority areas for action. Translating this research into policy and practice supports Royal Life Saving WA's efforts to gain a deeper understanding of drowning and its impacts, develop evidence-based and innovative solutions for drowning prevention, and empower the community to adopt safer aquatic behaviours.

LEAD

BUILD

EMPOWER



> FATAL AND NON-FATAL DROWNING

223
drowning incidents
(fatal and non-fatal)
occured in WA
in 2022/23

This is a
16.0%
decrease
on 2021/2

and a
5.5%
average increase
over the
past decade

Fatal Drowning

There were 29 fatal drowning incidents recorded in WA waterways between July 2022 and June 2023, at a rate of 1.0 per 100,000 population. This was a 20.5% decrease from 2021/22 with trends showing a 5.8% decrease in fatal drowning rates over the past ten years.

At the time of reporting, 51.4% of fatal drowning cases were still open pending investigation by the coroner.

Nationally, WA accounted for 11.0% of drowning deaths in 2022/23 and recorded the third highest drowning rate behind Queensland and New South Wales.

Non-Fatal Drowning

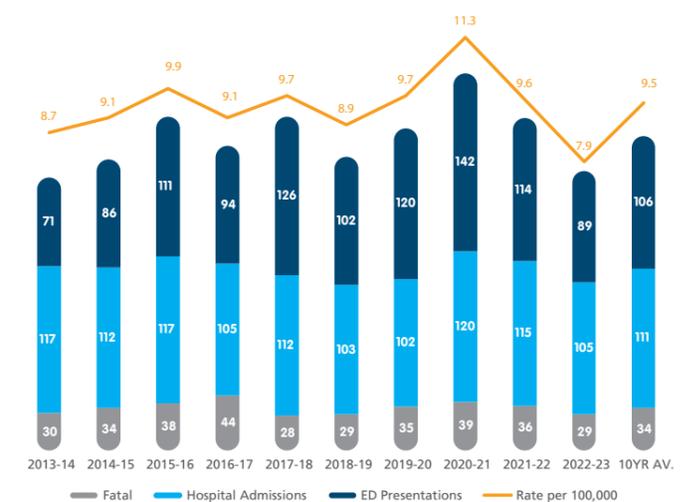
There were 194 non-fatal drowning incidents recorded in WA during 2022/23, a 15.3% decrease from 2021/22.

Of these, 105 people were admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning incident at a rate of 3.7 per 100,000 population. This was an 9.9% decrease from 2021/22, with trends showing a 5.8% decrease in hospitalisation rates over the past decade. Of those admitted to hospital, 14.3% sustained a brain injury as a result of the incident.

In addition, 89 people presented at an emergency department following a non-fatal drowning incident at a rate of 4.0 per 100,000 population. This was a 23.1% decrease from 2021/22, with trends showing a 12.5% increase in the rate of emergency department presentations over the past ten years.

For every fatal drowning death recorded in 2022/23, there were **seven non-fatal drowning incidents.**

Overall drowning in WA, 2013/14 to 2022/23



State and Territory breakdown, Fatal Drowning



> WHO DROWNS

Males continue to account for the majority of drowning incidents (fatal and non-fatal) with males 2.7 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (11.5 per 100,000) than females (4.4 per 100,000) in 2022/23. In continuing trends, drowning rates decreased for both males (15.4%) and females (21.4%) from 2021/22.

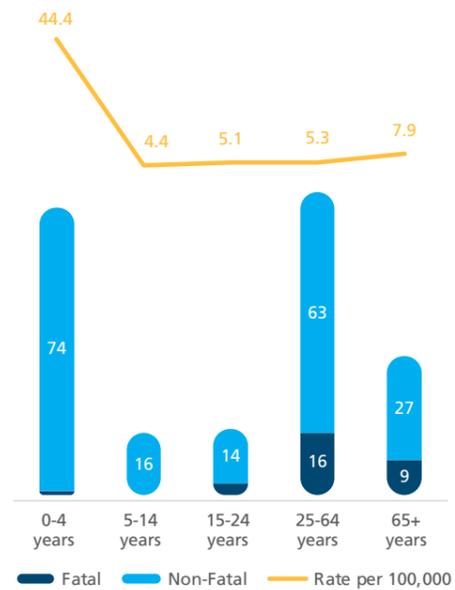
72.7% of those who drowned in Western Australia were male 

The risk of drowning varies significantly with age, affecting different age groups in unique ways and highlighting the need for targeted age-specific interventions to reduce drowning risk. Toddlers recorded the highest rate of drowning in 2022/23 (44.4 per 100,000) followed by older adults 65+ years (7.9 per 100,000) and adults aged 25-64 years (5.3 per 100,000). In a continuing trend, drowning severity increased with age with older adults over 65 years of age recording the highest rate of fatal drowning (2.0 per 100,000).

Overall drowning rates for toddlers, children and young people decreased from 2021/22, with the biggest decrease seen amongst children (60.3%) and toddlers (28.5%). Conversely, overall drowning rates increased for adults and older adults, with adult rates more than double that seen in 2021/22.

There were no fatal drowning deaths recorded for children aged 5-14 years in 2022/23, a positive outcome after recording the highest number of drowning deaths in a decade in 2021/22. In addition, drowning in toddlers aged 0-4 years has seen a significant shift over the past decade with fatal drowning rates halving over this time.

Drowning by Age Group, 2022/23



Aboriginal Australians continue to be over-represented in drowning data with 9.5% of incidents (fatal and non-fatal) involving Aboriginal Australians, a 3.9% increase from 2021/22. Aboriginal Australians were 2.5 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (19.2 per 100,000) than non-Aboriginal Australians (7.7 per 100,000).

Overall, 24.8% of drowning incidents (fatal and non-fatal) involved a person **born overseas**, a 7.2% increase from 2021/22. This was higher for fatal drowning where half of the deaths recorded in 2022/23 involved a person born overseas. Of these, 70.0% were from a non-English speaking background. Almost half (40.0%) were long term residents having lived in Australia for 10 or more years and 30.0% were in Australia on international students or working holiday visas. Country of birth information wasn't available for 31.0% of drowning deaths.

Overall, 34.2% of drowning deaths recorded in 2022/23 **were visitors** to WA, with 21.1% traveling within WA and 7.9% interstate visitors.

Of the fatal drowning deaths recorded in 2022/23, 44.8% of people involved were from **low socio-economic areas**, double the amount observed in 2021/22.

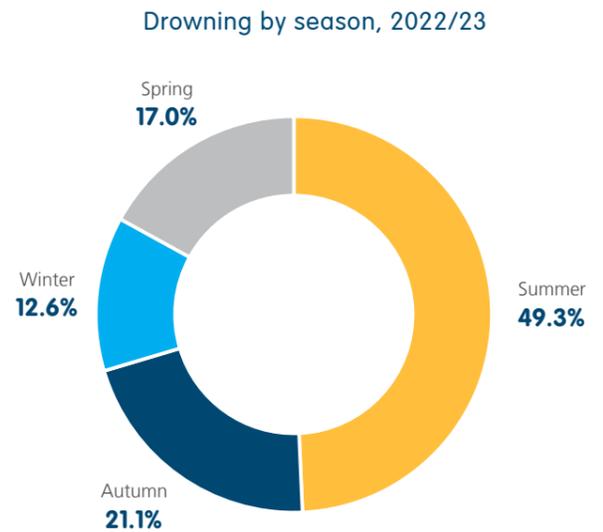


> WHEN AND WHERE DOES DROWNING OCCUR

Like previous years, almost half (49.3%) of drowning incidents occurred during the summer months, likely due to increased participation in water activities, driven by higher temperatures and extended daylight hours. In addition, holiday season brings many people to unfamiliar water locations, often leading to decreased vigilance and social gatherings with alcohol consumption can also contribute to the heightened risk of drowning in summer.

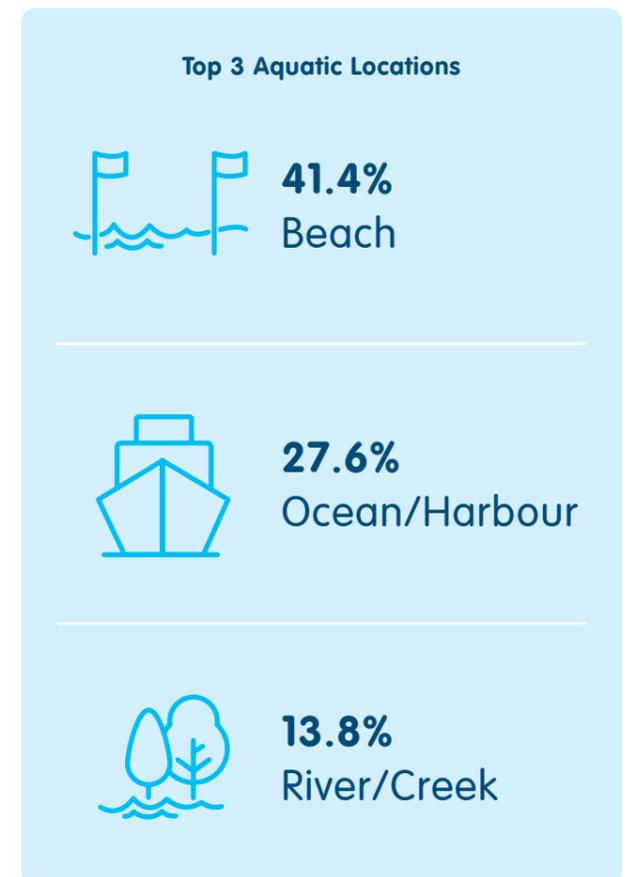
There was a shift in 2022/23 with drowning deaths most likely to occur on the weekend (51.7%) rather than during the week as seen in previous years. Only 6.9% of fatal drowning incidents occurred on a public holiday/ long weekend.

Drowning was most likely to occur in the morning (37.9%) or afternoon (27.6%) with 8-9am and 11am-12pm the highest risk times for drowning.

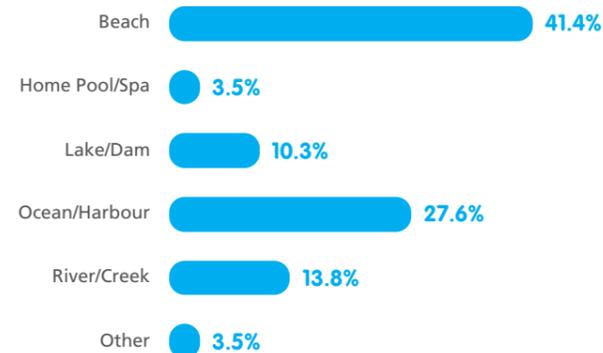


More than a third of drowning deaths (34.5%) occurred in remote or very remote locations within WA.

Fatal drowning incidents were most likely to occur at coastal (69.0%) and inland (24.1%) waterways with beaches (41.4%), ocean/harbour (27.6%) and river/creek (13.8%) the most common locations for drowning. For non-fatal drowning, large areas of water (32.4%), home swimming pools (15.3%) and beaches (10.5%) were the most common locations for drowning.



Fatal drowning by aquatic location, 2022/23



High-risk times for drowning



Summer months



Saturday and Sunday



Morning between 8-9am & 11am-12pm

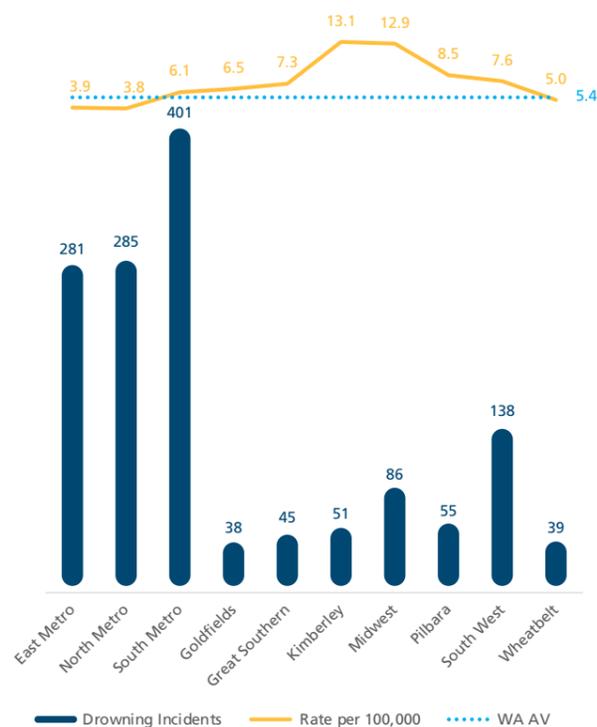
Metro vs. regional aquatic location

In a continuing trend, drowning risk was greater in regional and remote areas of WA likely due to less access to water safety education, resulting in lower awareness of safe practices. Additionally, isolation can lead to riskier behaviours, increasing exposure to water hazards without adequate safety measures and limited access to emergency services.

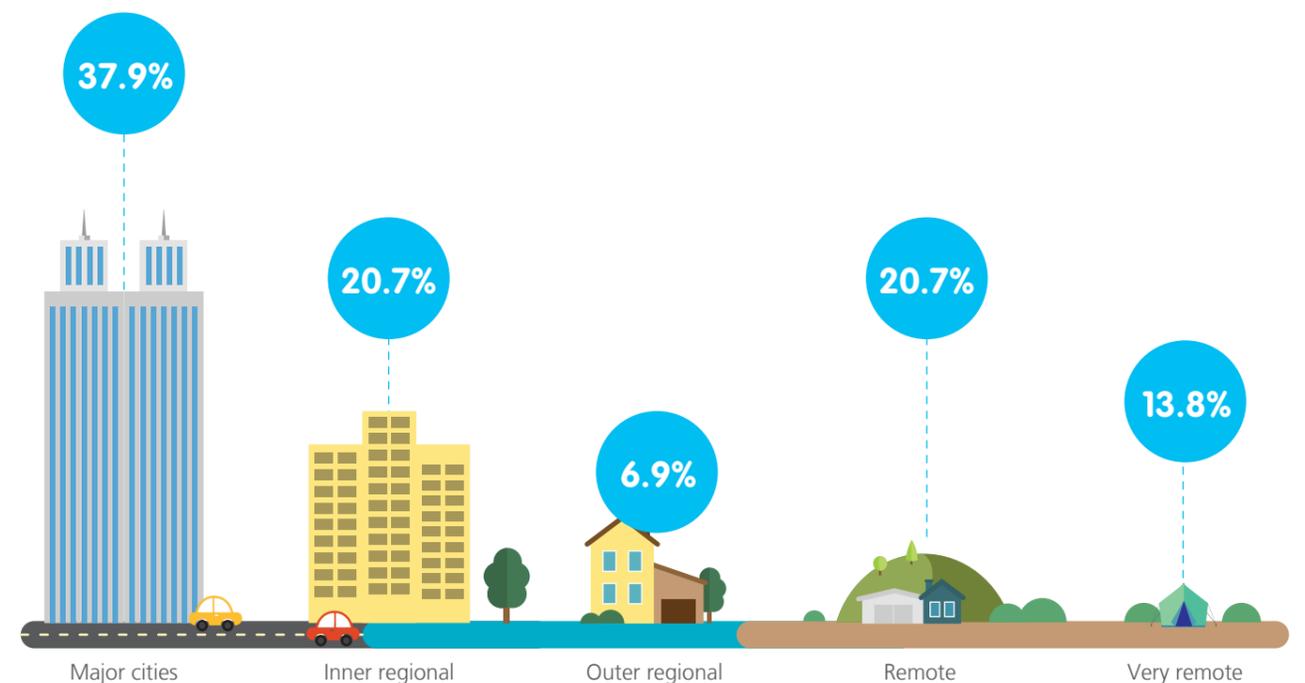
While a higher proportion for drowning (fatal and non-fatal) occurred in the Perth metropolitan area (70.1%), rates of drowning were higher in regional WA where people were 1.7 times more likely to drown (7.1 per 100,000) than in the Perth metropolitan area (4.2 per 100,000). This was greater for fatal drowning incidents where people were 5.7 times more likely to die from drowning in regional WA (3.0 per 100,000) than the Perth metropolitan area (0.5 per 100,000).

Drowning trends over the past ten years show that the Kimberley, Midwest, and Pilbara regions recorded the highest overall drowning rates (fatal and non-fatal), while the Wheatbelt, East Metropolitan and North Metropolitan regions recorded the lowest rates.

Drowning by health region, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Proportion of drowning deaths by remoteness

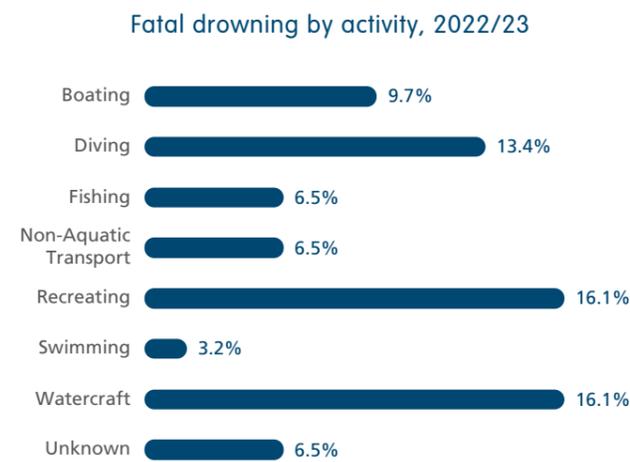


> ACTIVITIES: HOW PEOPLE DROWN

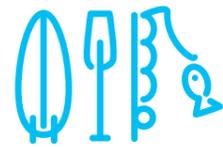
Unlike previous years, diving was the most common activity being undertaken at the time of fatal drowning incidents (19.4%) including snorkelling, scuba diving and free diving. Swimming, recreating around water and watercraft were other common activities being undertaken (16.1%).

Most people involved in fatal drowning incidents were participating in an aquatic activity at the time and entered the water intentionally (62.1%). Of those who weren't prepared to enter the water, 44.4% slipped or fell, one third (33.3%) crashed and 22.2% were swept in by a wave.

For non-fatal drowning, 30.5% were participating in a water sport and 20.0% were participating in a leisure activity at the time of the incident.



Entry to Water – Fatal Drowning, 2022/23



62.1%

Aquatic activity participation



44.4%

Slipped/fell



22.2%

Swept in by a wave

> RESCUE AND RESPONSE

A rescue was attempted in 69.0% of fatal drowning incidents recorded in 2022/23. Members of the public were most likely to undertake the rescue (55.5%) followed by friends (25.0%) and/or family members (20.0%).

An aquatic rescue wasn't be performed in 31.0% of fatal drowning incidents. Common reasons for a rescue not being performed include individuals participating alone, dangerous conditions posing risks to rescuers, lack of swimming skills, or limited availability of rescue/safety equipment. These challenges can prevent the safe and effective execution of a rescue.



Of those incidents where an aquatic rescue was performed, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) was performed in three out of four incidents (75.0%).

CPR was most likely to be performed by emergency services such as police, ambulance officers and lifeguards (73.3%) and/or members of the public (60.0%). In instances where CPR wasn't performed, most common reasons included that the rescuers were unable to retrieve the person or that the person was clearly deceased upon removal from the water.



A rescue was attempted in **69.0%** of fatal drowning incidents



Risk Factors



44.8%
Low socio-economic status



41.4%
Medical conditions



37.9%
Participating alone

- > 34.5% Remoteness of location
- > 24.1% Environmental factors such as poor weather and/or water conditions
- > 20.7% Participating at an unfamiliar location
- > 13.8% Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > 13.8% Poor swimming ability
- > 10.3% Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket wear
- > 6.9% Inexperience in activity being undertaken
- > 6.9% Flood-related

TODDLER (0-4 YEARS) DROWNING

July 2013 to June 2023



Boys were 1.3 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (27.9 per 100,000) than girls (21.2 per 100,000).

58.4% of all drowning deaths were males



Average length of stay in hospital was **2.7 days**.

5.3% of toddlers admitted to hospital **experienced brain injury** as a result of the non-fatal drowning incident.

High-risk times for drowning



50.3%
Summer months



64.4%
Weekdays



55.2%
Afternoon
12-2PM

There were **1,042 drowning incidents** recorded amongst toddlers aged 0-4 years

There were **21** drowning deaths

and **400** hospital admissions

at a rate of **60.4** drownings per 100,000

and has the **#1** drowning rate of any age group in WA



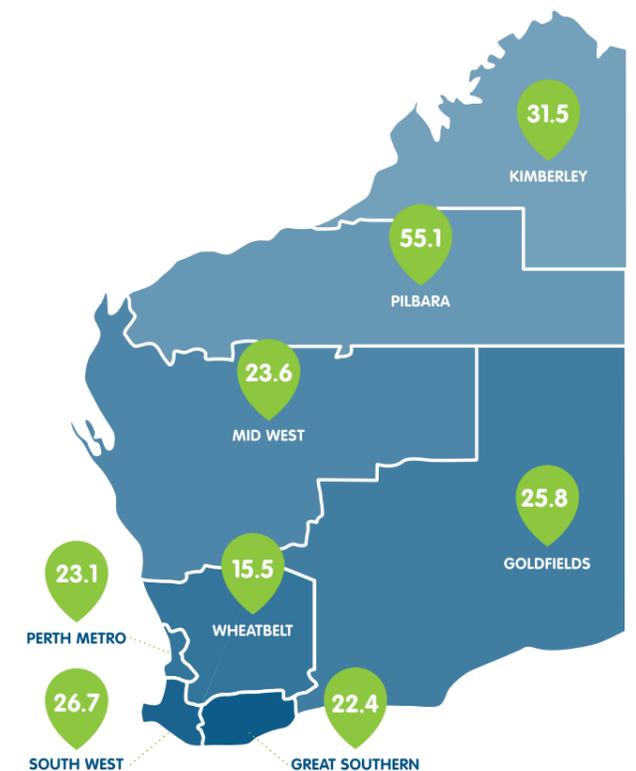
97.9% were born in Australia



2.1% were born overseas

Toddler drowning was **1.3 times more likely to occur in regional WA** (29.5 per 100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (23.1 per 100,000).

Drowning by location, 2013/14 to 2022/23 (Rate per 100,000 population)



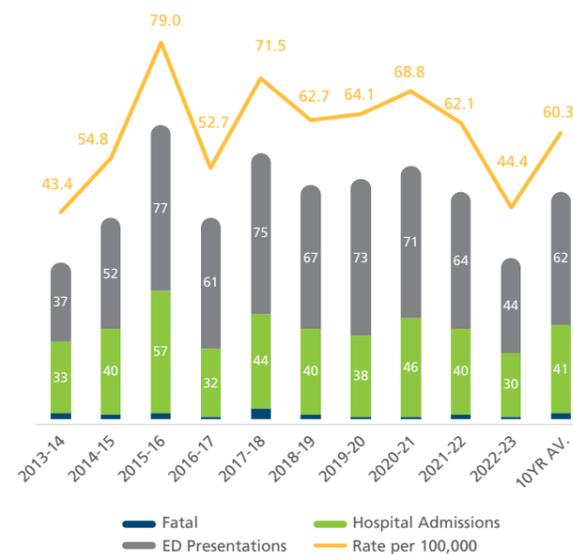
Fatal Drowning

There were 21 fatal drowning incidents involving toddlers aged 0-4 years, at a rate of 1.2 per 100,000 the third highest of any age group in WA. Fatal drowning trends show that average fatal drowning rates for toddlers have halved (49.9%) over the past ten years.

Non-Fatal Drowning

There were 1,021 non-fatal drowning incidents involving toddlers over the past ten years. Of these, 400 toddlers were admitted to hospital at a rate of 23.2 per 100,000. Both the average number and rate of toddlers being admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning incident have decreased by 5.8% and 5.3% respectively over the past ten years. In addition, 621 toddlers presented at an emergency department in the Perth Metropolitan area at a rate of 45.4 per 100,000. Both the average number and rate of toddlers presenting at an emergency department following a non-fatal drowning incident have increased by 5.6% and 5.2% respectively over the past ten years.

Toddler drowning by year, 2013/14 to 2022/23



71%

Of toddlers were **aged 0-2 years**



Overall, **7.7% of toddlers who drowned (fatal and non-fatal) were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal toddlers 1.5 times more likely to drown (86.4 per 100,000) than non-Aboriginal toddlers (58.9 per 100,000).

Top 3 Locations



43.0% Home Swimming Pool



19.7% Bath/Shower



9.7% Inland Waterways

Fatal Drowning at Home Swimming Pools

68.8% Home

18.8% Relative's House

12.5% Neighbours Property



Aquatic rescue and **CPR was performed in 95.2%** of fatal drowning incidents involving toddlers, with family members the most common first responders.



47.4%
Gate/Door propped open

Risk Factors for Drowning



100% Lack of supervision



23.8% Low socio-economic status



14.3% Medical conditions



4.8% Remoteness of location

Lack of supervision was a contributing factor in all fatal toddler drowning incidents.

In one third of cases (33.3%), supervision was absent for less than five minutes, while parents were doing household chores (41.4%), caring for other children (10.3%), socialising with other adults (10.3%) or sleeping (6.9%).



CHILD (5-14 YEARS) DROWNING
July 2013 to June 2023



Boys were 2.2 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (5.4 per 100,000) than girls (2.4 per 100,000).

69.9% of all drowning deaths were males



Average length of stay in hospital was **2.1 days**.

11.8% of children admitted to hospital **experienced brain injury** as a result of the non-fatal drowning incident.

High-risk times for drowning



51.9%
Summer months



62.5%
Weekends



75.0%
Afternoon
3-5PM

There were **312 drowning incidents** recorded amongst children aged 5-14 years

There were **8** drowning deaths

and **127** hospital admissions

at a rate of **9.2** drownings per 100,000

and has the **#2** drowning rate of any age group in WA

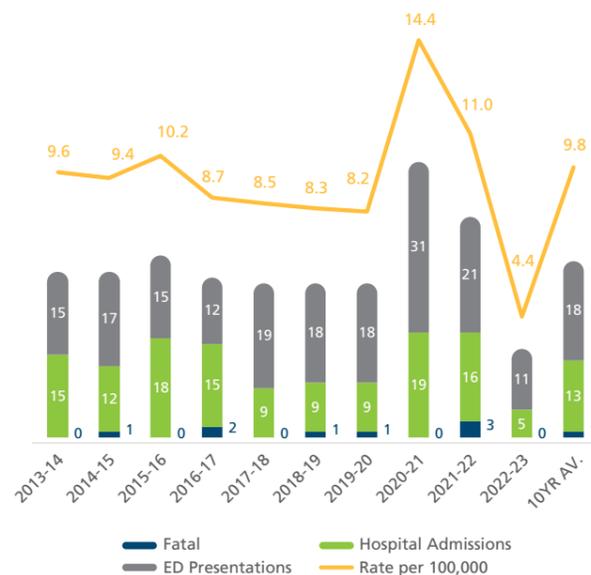
Fatal Drowning

There were eight fatal drowning incidents involving children aged 5-14 years, at a rate of 0.2 per 100,000 the lowest of any age group in WA. Fatal drowning trends show that while fatal drowning rates have remained low in WA with an average of one death per year, there has been a 55.7% increase in the average rate of fatal drowning amongst children over the past ten years.

Non-Fatal Drowning

There were 304 non-fatal drowning incidents involving children over the past ten years. Of these, 127 children were admitted to hospital at a rate of 3.8 per 100,000. Both the average number and rate of toddlers being admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning incident have decreased by 15.9% and 22.3% respectively over the past ten years. In addition, 177 children presented at an emergency department in the Perth Metropolitan area at a rate of 7.6 per 100,000. Both the average number and rate of children presenting at an emergency department following a non-fatal drowning incident have increased by 26.9% and 16.0% respectively over the past ten years.

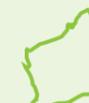
Child drowning by year, 2013/14 to 2022/23



88.5% were born in Australia



11.5% were born overseas



37.5% were visitors traveling within WA

88%

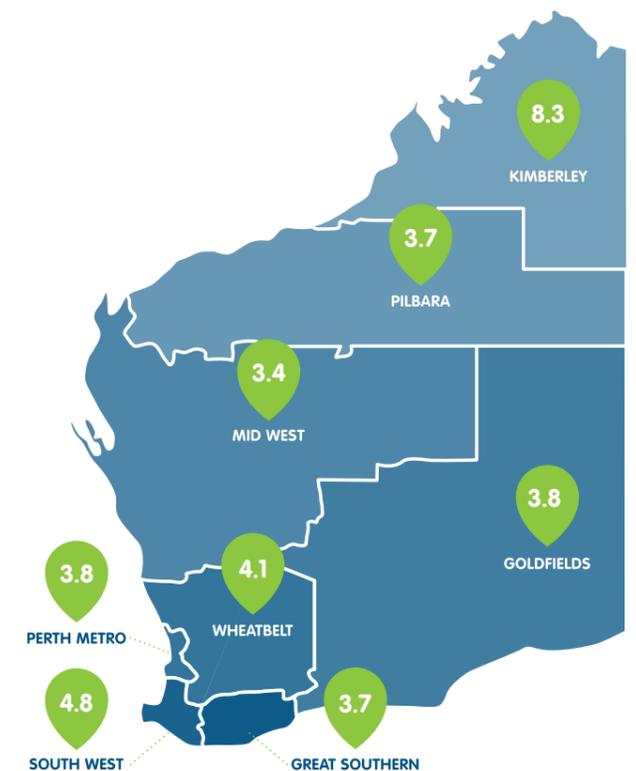
were aged 5-9 years



Overall, **9.4%** of children who drowned (fatal and non-fatal) were **Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal toddlers 1.7 times more likely to drown (15.1 per 100,000) than non-Aboriginal toddlers (8.8 per 100,000).

Child drowning was **1.2 times more likely to occur in regional WA** (4.5 per 100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (3.8 per 100,000).

Drowning by location, 2013/14 to 2022/23 (Rate per 100,000 population)



Top 3 Locations

 **27.8%** Coastal

 **25.6%** Home Swimming Pool

 **15.8%** Inland Waterways

Top 3 Activities

 **50.0%** Recreating

 **12.5%** Swimming

 **12.5%** Watercraft



Aquatic rescue and **CPR was performed in 100%** of fatal drowning incidents involving children, with family members (75.0%) the most common first responders.

Risk Factors for Drowning

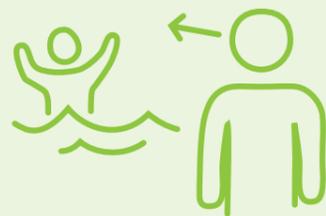
 **100%** Lack of supervision

 **50.0%** Medical conditions

 **37.5%** Environmental factors

 **25.0%** Poor swimming skills

 **25.0%** Remoteness of location



Lack of supervision was a contributing factor in all fatal child drowning incidents.

Supervision was absent for less than five minutes in 37.5% of cases, while parents were doing household chores (33.3%), socialising and/or talking on the phone (33.3%)





Males were 3.1 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (6.2 per 100,000) than females (2.0 per 100,000).

76.6% of those who drowned were male 

Average length of stay in hospital was **3.0 days**.

19.0% of young people admitted to hospital **experienced brain injury** as a result of the non-fatal drowning incident.

High-risk times for drowning

 **47.2%**
Summer months

 **50.0%**
Weekends

 **62.5%**
Afternoons
2-4PM

There were **216 drowning incidents** recorded amongst young people 15-24 years

There were **32** drowning deaths

and **105** hospital admissions

at a rate of **6.5** drownings per 100,000

and has the **#3** drowning rate of any age group in WA

Drowning risk increased with age

28.1%
15-19 years

71.9%
20-24 years

Young people were most likely to be participating in an aquatic activity at the time of the incident, with swimming, fishing and boating the most common activities being undertaken.

Fatal Drowning

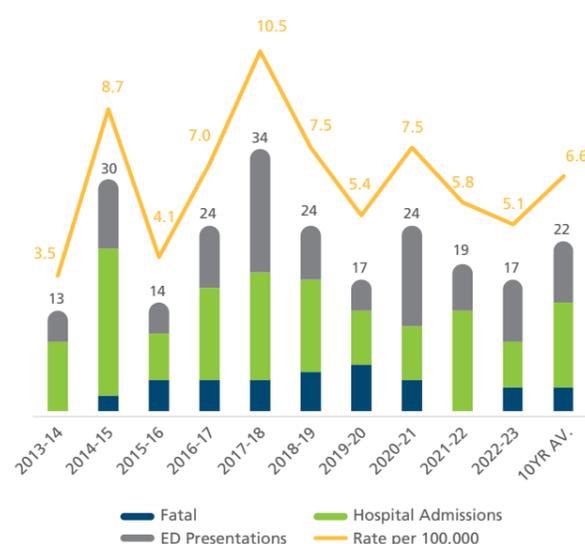
There were 32 fatal drowning incidents involving young people aged 15-24 years, at a rate of 1.0 per 100,000 the fourth highest of any age group in WA. Fatal drowning trends show that average fatal drowning rates amongst young people have increased by 35.2% over the past ten years.

Non-Fatal Drowning

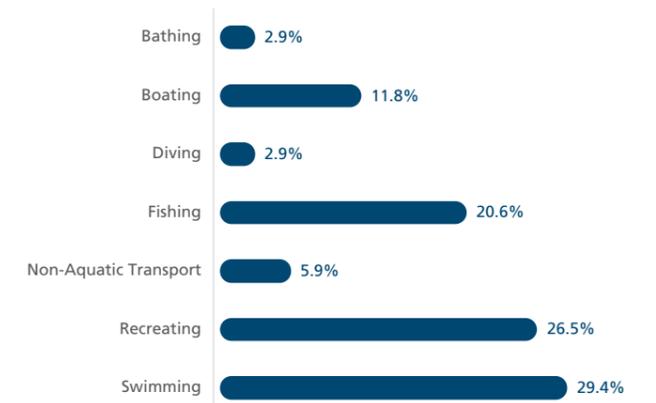
There were 184 non-fatal drowning incidents involving young people over the past ten years. Of these, 105 young people were admitted to hospital at a rate of 3.2 per 100,000. Both the average number and rate of young people being admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning incident have decreased by 25.0% and 21.2% respectively over the past ten years.

In addition, 79 young people presented at an emergency department in the Perth Metropolitan area at a rate of 2.9 per 100,000.

Youth drowning by year, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Youth drowning by activity, 2013/14 to 2022/23



56.3% employed
31.3% students
9.4% unemployed

Overall, **6.0% of young people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with drowning rates slightly lower for Aboriginal young people (6.0/100,000) than non-Aboriginal young people (6.6/100,000).

Multicultural communities were over-represented in youth drowning with 32.9% of young people involved in a drowning incident born overseas.

 92.3% were from a non-English speaking background

 Over half (53.9%) were International Students or on working holiday visas.

 34.4% were visitors travelling within WA.

Top Locations



41.9% Ocean/Harbour



22.6% Lake/Dam



16.1% River/Creek

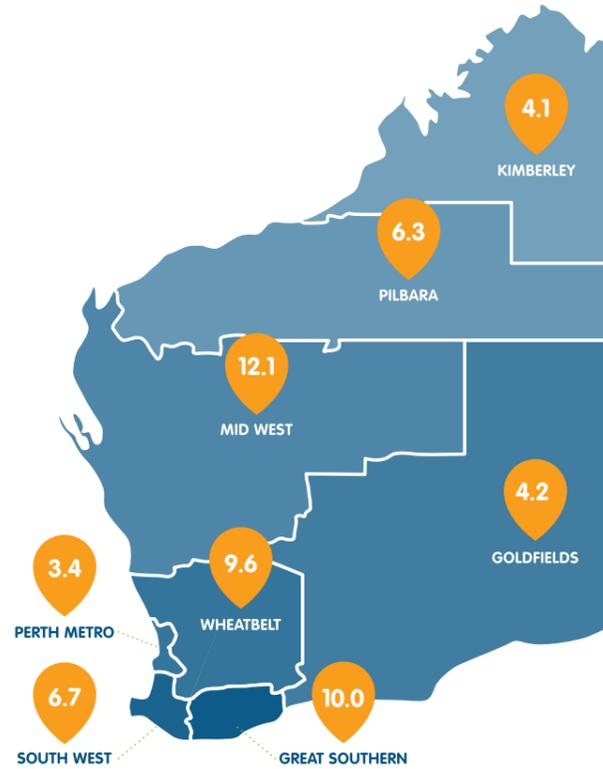


12.9% Beach



Aquatic rescue was attempted in 71.9% of fatal drowning incidents, with friends (47.8%) and bystanders/ members of the public (39.1%) the most common first responders. **CPR was performed in almost half of these rescues (47.8%).**

Drowning by location, 2013/14 to 2022/23 (Rate per 100,000 population)



While a greater proportion of youth drowning incidents occurred in the Perth Metropolitan area (67.2%), drowning was 2.2 times **more likely to occur in regional WA** (7.6/100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (3.4/100,000).

Risk Factors for Drowning



59.4% Environmental factors

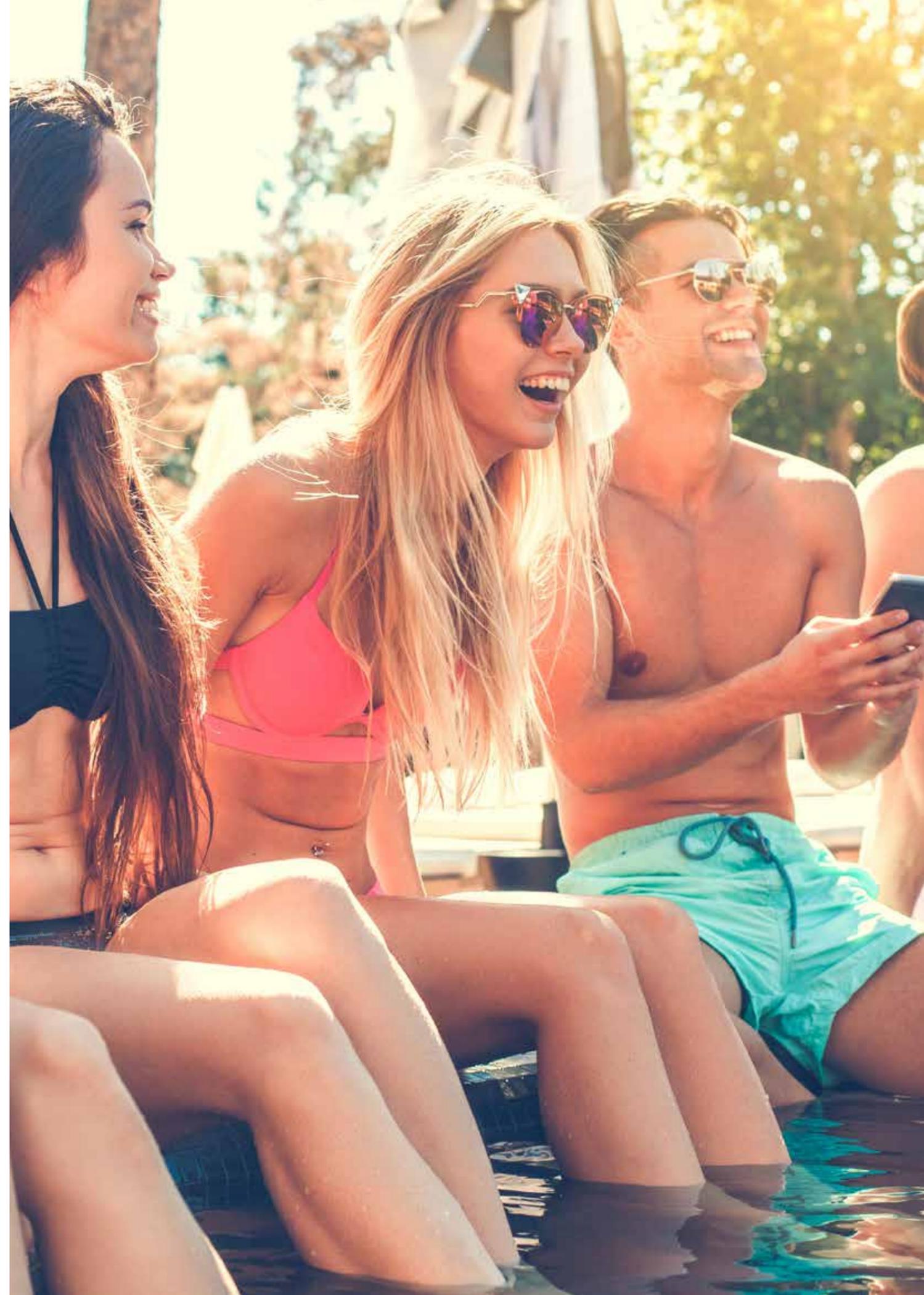


37.5% Participating at unfamiliar locations



28.1% Poor swimming ability

- > **28.1%** Low socio-economic status
- > **21.9%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **21.9%** Recreational drug use
- > **15.6%** Remoteness of location
- > **15.6%** Injury
- > **12.5%** Medical condition
- > **12.5%** Participating alone
- > **12.5%** Inexperience in activity
- > **9.4%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)



ADULT (45-64 YEARS) DROWNING
July 2013 to June 2023



Males were 2.5 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (6.1 per 100,000) than females (2.4 per 100,000).

71.7% of those who drowned were male



Average length of stay in hospital was **4.1 days**.

5.7% of adults admitted to hospital **experienced brain injury** as a result of the non-fatal drowning incident.

High-risk times for drowning



39.8%
Summer months



51.2%
Weekdays



41.5%
Afternoon
2-4PM

There were **342 drowning incidents** recorded amongst adults 45-64 years

There were **82** drowning deaths

and **194** hospital admissions

at a rate of **5.3** drownings per 100,000

and has the **#5** drowning rate of any age group in WA

Drowning risk increased with age

47.6%

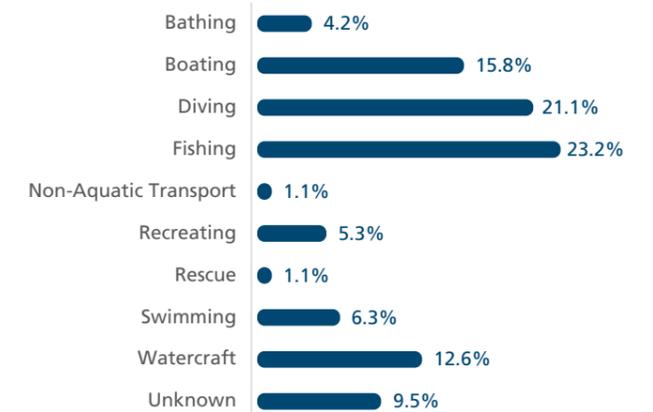
45-54 years

52.4%

55-64 years

Adults were most likely to be participating in an aquatic activity at the time of the incident, with fishing, diving, and boating the most common activities being undertaken.

Adult drowning by activity, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Fatal Drowning

There were 82 fatal drowning incidents involving adults 45-64 years, at a rate of 1.3 per 100,000 the second highest of any age group in WA. Fatal drowning trends show that average fatal drowning rates amongst adults have decreased by 12.8% over the past ten years.

Non-Fatal Drowning

There were 260 non-fatal drowning incidents involving adults over the past ten years. Of these, 194 adults aged 45-64 years were admitted to hospital at a rate of 3.0 per 100,000. This means that on average, for every adult that died from drowning over the past ten years, there were two admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning incident.

In addition, 66 adults aged 45-64 years presented at an emergency department in the Perth Metropolitan area at a rate of 4.6 per 100,000.

Adult drowning by year, 2013/14 to 2022/23



61.0% employed | **22.0%** students | **12.2%** unemployed

Overall, **3.5% of adults who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal adults 1.5 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (7.7/100,000) than non-Aboriginal adults (5.2/100,000).

Multicultural communities were over-represented in adult drowning data with 40.7% born overseas

64.0% were from a non-English speaking background



80.0% were long term residents having lived in Australia for 10 or more years.



28.1% of people drowned while travelling within WA

Top Locations



39.0% Ocean/Harbour



29.3% Beach



11.0% River/Creek

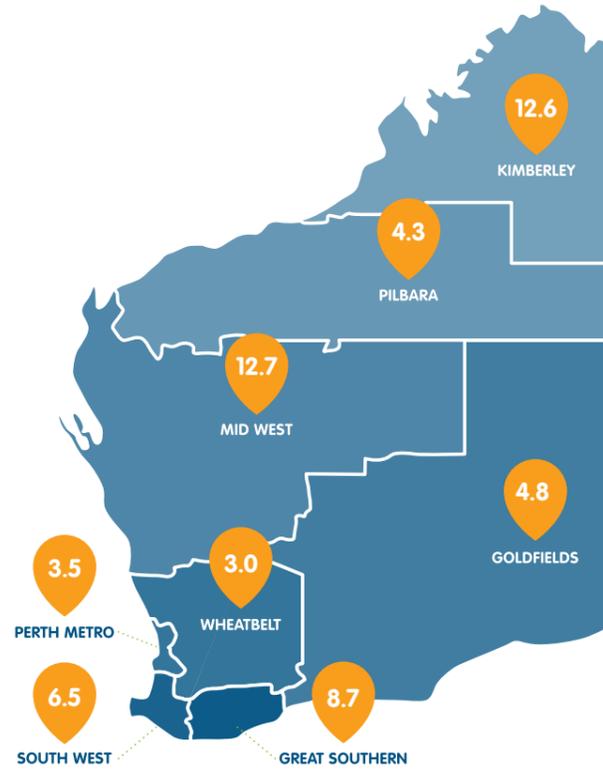


6.1% Lake/Dam



Aquatic rescue was attempted in 63.4% of fatal drowning incidents, with bystanders/members of the public (51.9%) and family members (32.7%) the most common first responders. **CPR was performed in half of these rescues (51.2%).**

Drowning by location, 2013/14 to 2022/23 (Rate per 100,000 population)



While a greater proportion of adult drowning incidents occurred in the Perth Metropolitan area (63.0%), **drowning was twice as likely to occur in regional WA (7.0/100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (3.5/100,000).**

Risk Factors for Drowning



42.7% Medical condition

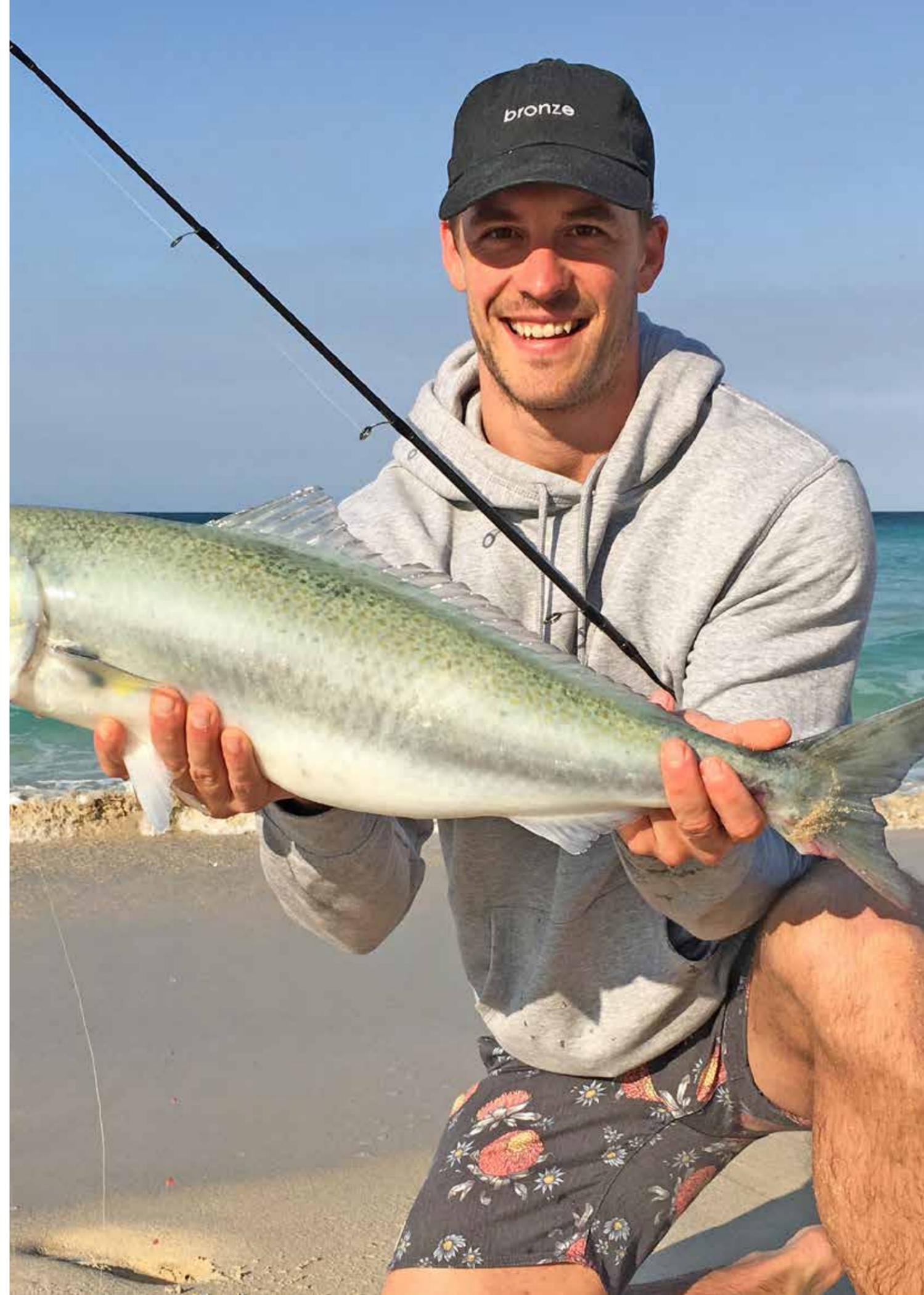


42.7% Participating alone



35.4% Environmental factors

- > **31.7%** Remoteness of location
- > **25.6%** Low socio-economic status
- > **20.7%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **19.5%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **17.1%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **14.6%** Recreational drug use
- > **13.4%** Poor swimming ability
- > **8.5%** Injury



OLDER ADULT (65+ YEARS) DROWNING
July 2013 to June 2023



Males were 4.2 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (9.1 per 100,000) than females (2.1 per 100,000).

79.1% of those who drowned were male 

Average length of stay in hospital was **4.5 days**. | 15.1% of older adults admitted to hospital **experienced brain injury** as a result of the non-fatal drowning incident.

High-risk times for drowning

-  **37.7%** Summer months
-  **67.8%** Weekdays
-  **36.8%** Mornings 9-11AM

There were **239 drowning incidents** recorded amongst older adults over 65 years

- There were **87** drowning deaths
- and **119** hospital admissions
- at a rate of **6.3** drownings per 100,000
- and has the **#4** drowning rate of any age group in WA

Fatal Drowning

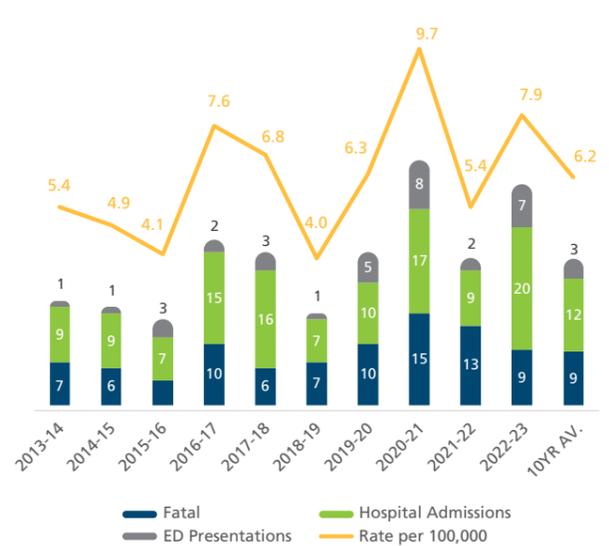
There were 87 fatal drowning incidents involving older adults 65 years and over, at a rate of 2.3 per 100,000, the highest of any age group in WA. Fatal drowning trends show that average fatal drowning rates amongst older adults have increased by 33.1% over the past ten years.

Non-Fatal Drowning

There were 152 non-fatal drowning incidents involving older adults over the past ten years. Of these, 119 older adults aged 65 years and over were admitted to hospital at a rate of 3.1 per 100,000. While the average number of hospital admissions amongst older adults have increased by 12.5% over the past ten years, rates of hospitalisation have decreased by 8.5%.

In addition, 33 older adults aged 65 years and over presented at an emergency department in the Perth Metropolitan area at a rate of 1.1 per 100,000.

Older adult drowning by year, 2013/14 to 2022/23



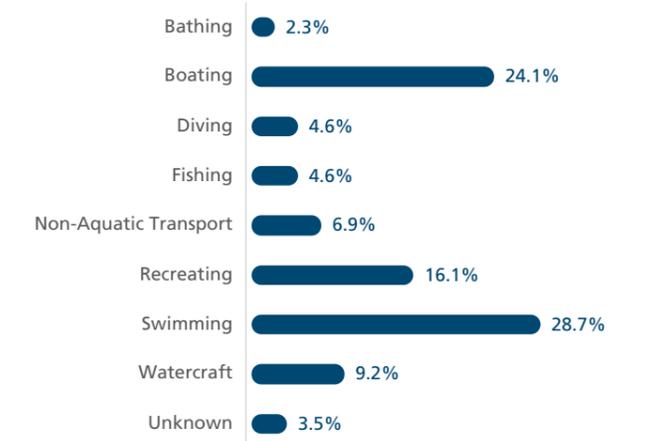
Drowning risk decreased with age

- 58.6%** 65-74 years
- 33.3%** 75-84 years
- 8.1%** 85-94 years

- 82.8%** retired
- 11.5%** employed
- 2.3%** unemployed

Older adults were most likely to be participating in an aquatic activity at the time of the incident, with swimming, boating and watercraft the most common activities being undertaken.

Older adult drowning by activity, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Overall, there were no drowning incidents amongst older adults involving Aboriginal Australians.

Multicultural communities were over-represented in older adult drowning data with 48.5% born overseas.

-  55.0% were from a non-English speaking background
-  Three quarters (75.0%) were long term residents having lived in Australia for 10 or more years.
-  14.9% of people drowned while travelling within WA

Top Locations



31.0% Ocean/Harbour



21.8% Beach



18.4% Home Pool

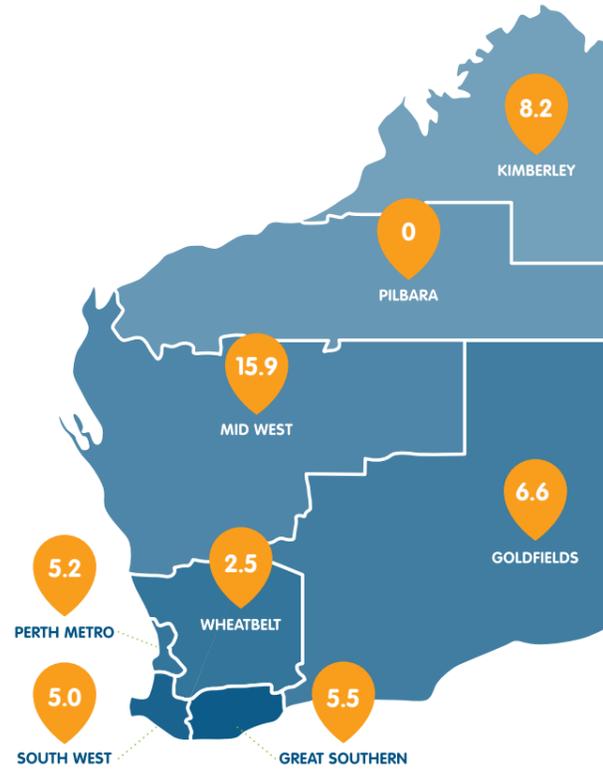


11.5% River/Creek



Aquatic rescue was attempted in 64.4% of fatal drowning incidents, with bystanders/members of the public (37.5%) and family members (32.1%) the most common first responders. **CPR was performed in more than half of these rescues (56.3%).**

Drowning by location, 2013/14 to 2022/23 (Rate per 100,000 population)



While a greater proportion of drowning incidents amongst older adults occurred in the Perth Metropolitan area (75.7%), **drowning was 1.2 times more likely to occur in regional WA (6.1/100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (5.2/100,000).**

Risk Factors for Drowning



78.2% Medical condition



62.1% Participating alone



27.6% Environmental factors

- > **21.8%** Low socio-economic status
- > **19.5%** Remoteness of location
- > **13.8%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **13.8%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **13.8%** Poor swimming ability
- > **8.1%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **6.9%** Injury





Males were three times more likely to drown than females.

75.1% of those who drowned were male



Average length of stay in hospital was **3.2 days**.

9.2% of people born overseas admitted to hospital **experienced brain injury** as a result of the non-fatal drowning incident.

High-risk times for drowning



37.3%
Summer months



55.6%
Weekdays



39.1%
Afternoons
1-3PM

There were **362 drowning incidents** recorded involving people born overseas

There were
133
drowning
deaths

and
229
hospital
admissions

at a rate of
4.0
drownings per
100,000

representing
25%
of total drownings
recorded in WA

Fatal Drowning

There were 133 fatal drowning incidents involving people born overseas, at a rate of 1.5 per 100,000 and representing 40.7% of all drowning deaths recorded in WA over the past decade. Fatal drowning trends show that average fatal drowning rates amongst people born overseas have increased by 8.0% over the past ten years, while drowning rates amongst those born in Australia have decreased by 25.7%.

Overall, people born overseas were 1.3 times more likely to be involved in a fatal drowning incident (1.5/100,000) than those born in Australia (1.1/100,000).

Non-Fatal Drowning

There were 229 people born overseas admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning incident over the past ten years, at rate of 2.5/100,000 and representing 20.7% of all non-fatal drowning related hospital admissions over the past ten years.

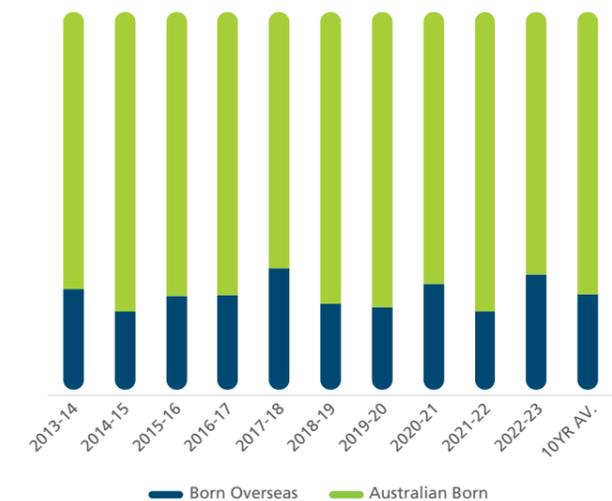
Non-fatal drowning trends show that the average proportion of non-fatal drowning incidents involving people born overseas has decreased by 3.5% over the past ten years.

Overall, **people born in Australia were 1.6 times more likely to drown** (6.3/100,000) than those born overseas (4.0/100,000).

People born overseas drowning by year, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Proportion of drowning, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Almost half (47.8%) of drowning incidents involving people born overseas were from a non-English speaking background.

People involved in a fatal drowning incident were most likely to be long term residents having lived in Australia for more than 10 years (51.9%).

9.8% were new arrivals having lived in Australia for less than five years.

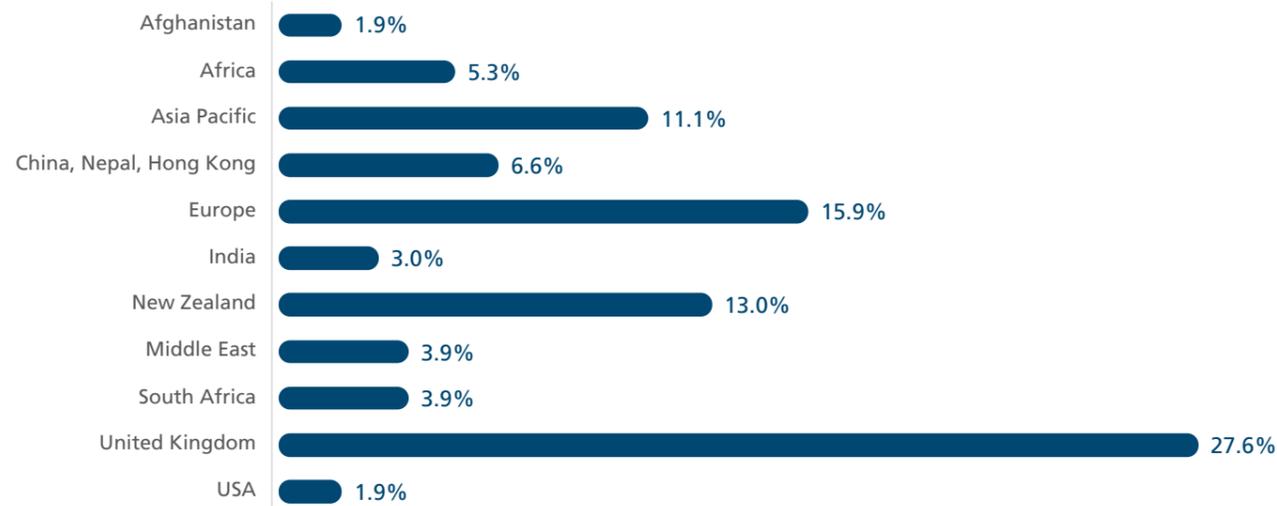


13.5% were in Australia on working or international student visas.

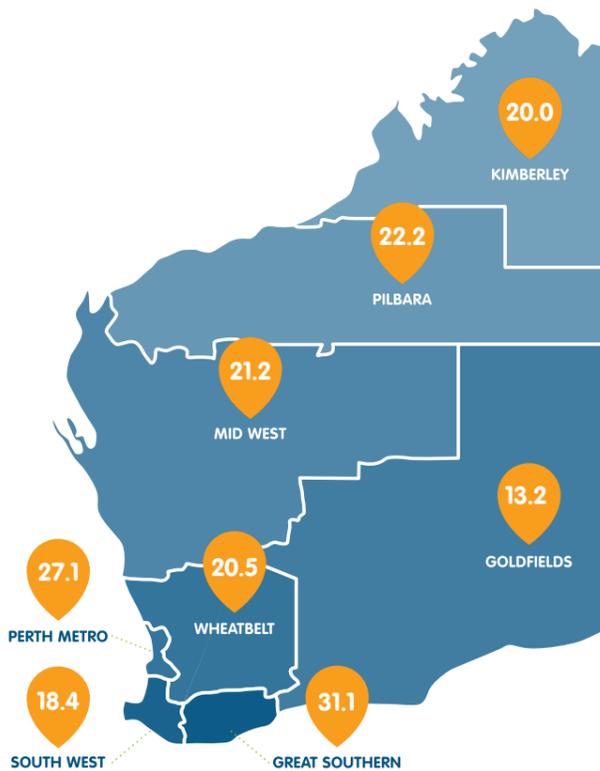


5.3% were overseas tourists holidaying in Australia.

Country of birth



Drowning by location, 2013/14 to 2022/23 (% of total drowning deaths)

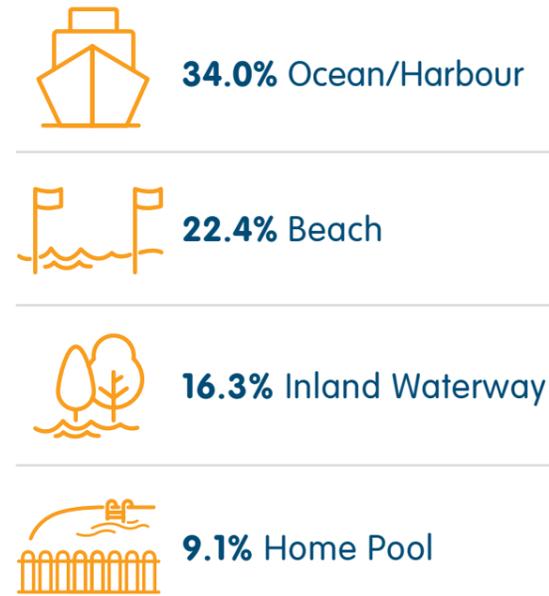


The proportion of people born overseas involved in drowning (fatal and non-fatal) increased with age (proportion of overall drowning).

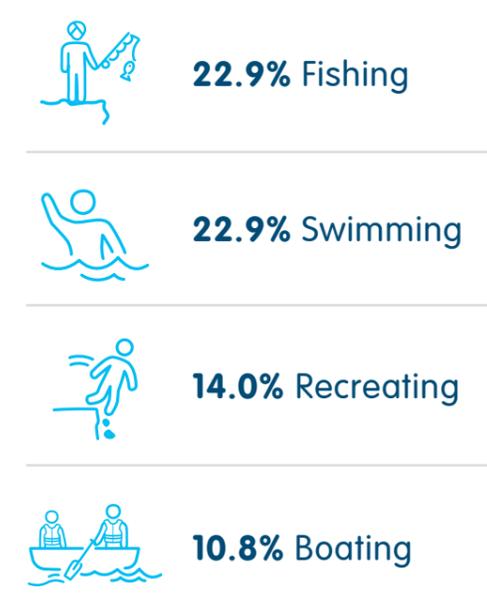


Drowning incidents involving people born overseas were **1.4 times more likely to occur in regional WA** (1.7/100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (1.3/100,000). This was higher for fatal drowning where drowning rates were almost three times higher in regional WA (1.0/100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (0.4/100,000).

Top Locations



Top Activities



Aquatic rescue was attempted in 69.9% of fatal drowning incidents, with bystanders/members of the public (43.0%) and professional staff such as lifeguards (29.3%) the most common first responders. **CPR was performed in more than two thirds of these rescues (69.9%).**

Risk Factors for Drowning





Males were 3.5 times more likely to drown than females.

77.8% of all drowning deaths were males



High-risk times for drowning



51.9%
Summer months



60.5%
Weekdays



43.2%
Afternoon
1-3PM

There were 225 **drowning incidents** recorded at inland waterway locations.

There were
81
drowning
deaths

and
144
hospital
admissions

at a rate of
0.84
drownings per
100,000

representing
16%
of total drownings
recorded in WA

Fatal Drowning

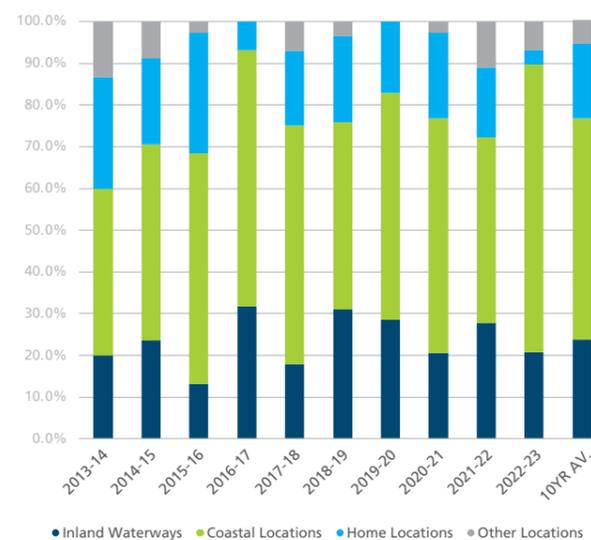
There were 81 fatal drowning incidents occurring at inland waterways at a rate of 0.3 per 100,000 and representing 23.7% of all drowning deaths recorded in WA over the past decade.

Fatal drowning trends show that both the average number (13.2%) and proportion (20.9%) of fatal drowning incidents occurring at inland waterway locations have increased over the past ten years.

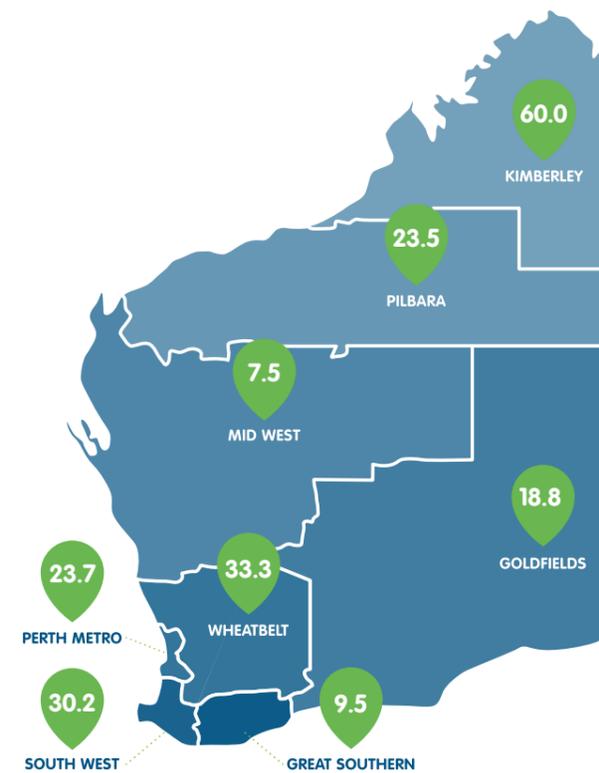
Non-Fatal Drowning

There were 144 people admitted to hospital following a non-fatal drowning incident at an inland waterway location over the past ten years, at rate of 0.5/100,000 and representing 13.0% of all non-fatal drowning related hospital admissions over the past ten years.

Proportion of fatal drowning at inland waterways, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Drowning by location, 2013/14 to 2022/23 (% of total drowning deaths)



Top 3 Waterways

- #1 Swan River
- #2 Ord River
- #3 Fitzroy River

Overall, 14.8% of people who drowned at inland waterways were Aboriginal, with **Aboriginal Australians 4.8 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident** (1.5/100,000) than non-Aboriginal Australians (0.3/100,000).

Aquatic rescue was attempted in 56.8% of fatal drowning incidents, with friends (39.1%) and bystanders/members of the public (34.8%) the most common. **CPR was performed in more than half of these rescues (52.2%).**

Multicultural communities were over-represented in drowning deaths at inland waterway locations with almost half (48.8%) born overseas.

69.2% were from a non-English speaking background

60.5% were long term residents having lived in Australia for 10 or more years.

57.9% of people drowned while travelling within WA

Top Locations



58.7% River/Creek



36.9% Lake/Dam



4.4% Other

Top Activities



23.8% Swimming



20.2% Recreating



13.1% Non-Aquatic Transport

Risk Factors for Drowning



49.4% Environmental factors



40.7% Participating alone



29.6% Low socio-economic status



Adults aged 25-44 years and older adults 65+ years were most at risk of drowning at inland waterway locations.
(Rate per 100,000)

1.2

Toddlers (0-4 years)

3.7

Children (5-14 years)

14.8

Young People (15-24 years)

43.2

Adults (25-64 years)

17.3

Adults (45-64 years)

19.8

Older Adults (65+ years)

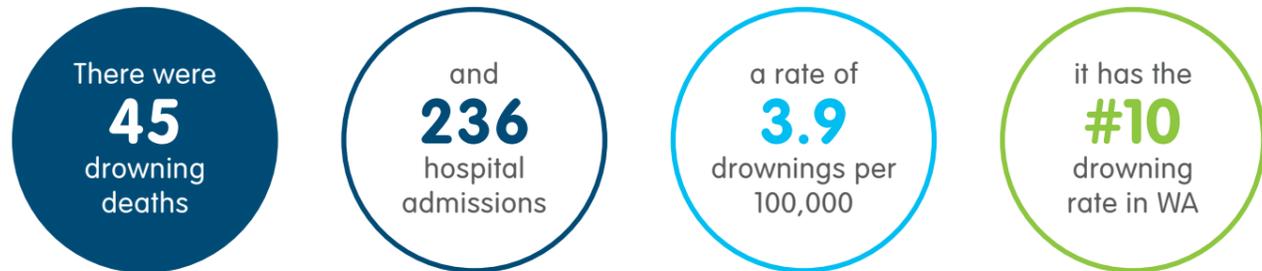
Overall, 50.6% of drowning occurred at inland waterways in the Perth Metropolitan area, however, **drowning was 3.8 times more likely to occur at an inland waterway** in regional WA (0.7/100,000) than the Perth Metropolitan area (0.2/100,000).





Photo: Mundaring Weir

There were **281 drowning incidents** recorded in the Perth Metropolitan - East region

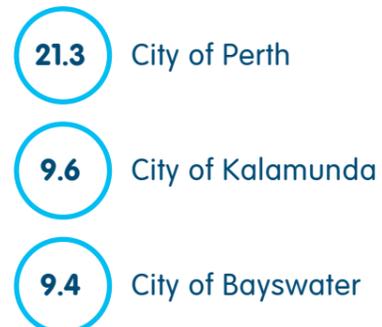


Males (47.1/100,000) were **1.9 times more likely to drown** than females (25.4/100,000)

65.5% of those who drowned in Perth Metro East were male



Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



70.8% were born in Australia



28.8% were born overseas



Of these, 73.9% were from a non-English speaking country

Overall, **4.6% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal Australians (8.7/100,000) were 2.3 times more likely to drown than non-Aboriginal Australians (3.8/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 6.7% of fatal drowning incidents, which is significantly lower than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (77.8%)
CPR performed (55.6%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
3.4 days



Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, children, and older adults.
(Rate per 100,000)

20.8

Toddlers (0-4 years)

3.5

Children (5-14 years)

2.7

Young People (15-24 years)

2.4

Adults (25-64 years)

3.3

Older Adults (65+ years)

High-risk times for drowning



47.3% Summer months



64.4% Weekdays
2.2% Public Holiday



51.1% Afternoons
12PM - 6PM

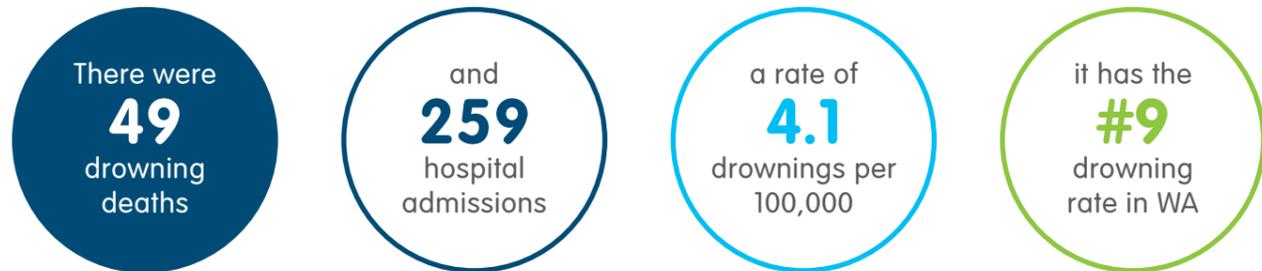
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **66.7%** Participating alone
- > **53.3%** Medical condition
- > **24.4%** Poor swimming ability
- > **20.0%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **17.8%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **15.6%** Lack of supervision
- > **11.1%** Low socio-economic status
- > **8.9%** Injury
- > **8.9%** Faulty or absent barrier
- > **6.7%** Participating at unfamiliar locations



Photo: Mettams Pool, North Beach

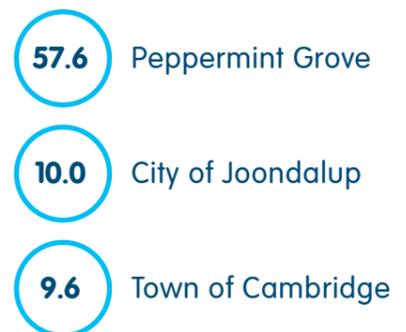
There were **308 drowning incidents** recorded in the Perth Metropolitan - North region



Males (54.5/100,000) were **2.1 times likely to drown** than females (25.6/100,000)



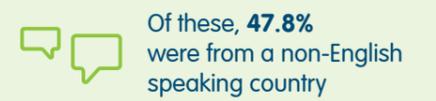
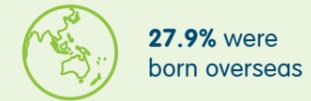
Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



Overall, **2.0% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal Australians (7.3/100,000) were 1.8 times more likely to drown than non-Aboriginal Australians (4.1/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 6.1% of fatal drowning incidents, which is significantly lower than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (79.6%)
CPR performed (71.4%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
3.8 days

↑ Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, older adults, and young people.
(Rate per 100,000)



High-risk times for drowning



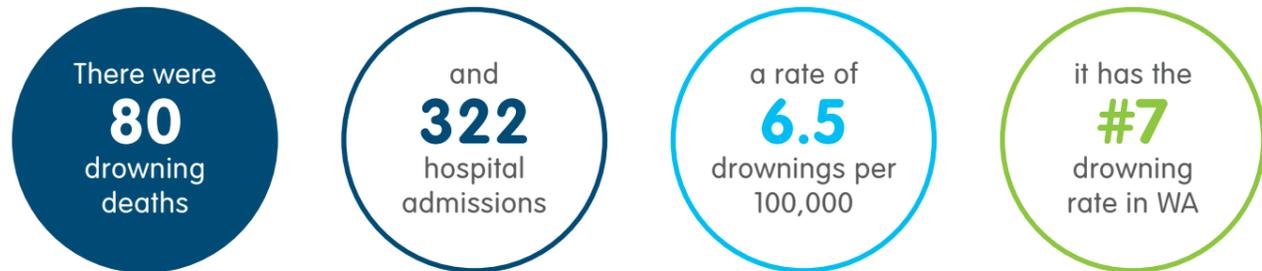
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **61.2%** Participating alone
- > **57.1%** Medical condition
- > **30.6%** Poor swimming ability
- > **24.5%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **16.3%** Lack of supervision
- > **12.2%** Low socio-economic status
- > **12.2%** Faulty or absent barrier
- > **6.1%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **6.1%** Inexperience with activity
- > **6.1%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **2.0%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **2.0%** Injury



Photo: Canning River

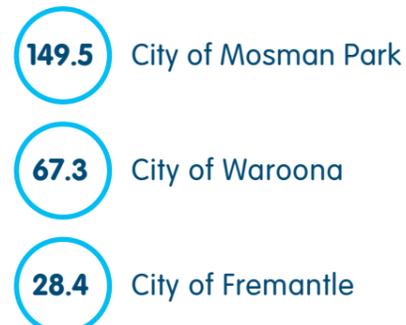
There were **402 drowning incidents** recorded in the Perth Metropolitan - South region



Males (84.0/100,000) were **2.8 times more likely to drown** than females (30.6/100,000)



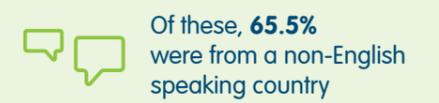
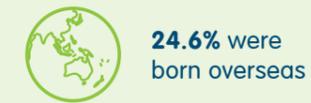
Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



Overall, **5.0% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal Australians (17.1/100,000) 2.9 times more likely to drown than non-Aboriginal Australians (5.9/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 15.0% of fatal drowning incidents, which is significantly lower than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (67.5%)
CPR performed (53.8%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
2.7 days

^ Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, older adults, and children.

(Rate per 100,000)



High-risk times for drowning



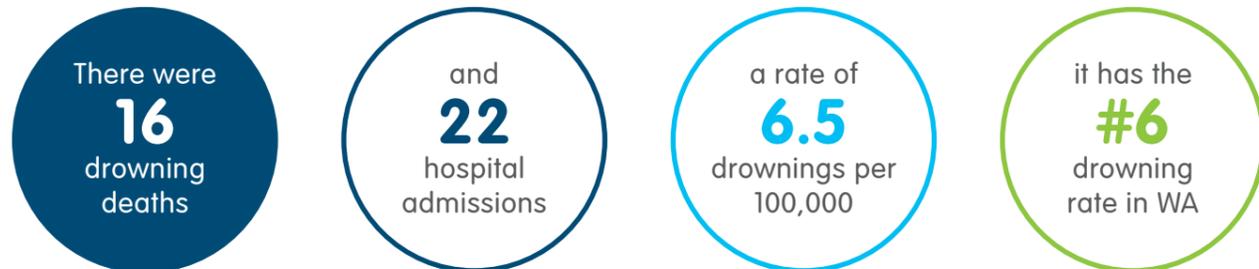
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **53.8%** Participating alone
- > **43.8%** Medical condition
- > **26.3%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **18.8%** Poor swimming ability
- > **17.5%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **17.5%** Low socio-economic status
- > **13.8%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **10.0%** Inexperience with activity
- > **10.0%** Lack of supervision
- > **8.8%** Injury
- > **8.8%** Remoteness of location
- > **7.5%** Faulty or absent barrier
- > **7.5%** Participating at unfamiliar locations



Photo: Burra Rock, Kambalda

There were **38 drowning incidents** recorded in the Goldfields region



Males (98.4/100,000) were **3.3 times more likely to drown** than females (30.1/100,000)



Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



86.8% were born in Australia



13.2% were born overseas



Of these, all were from a non-English speaking background

Overall, **10.5% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with drowning rates similar for both Aboriginal Australians (6.4/100,000) and non-Aboriginal Australians (7.1/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 56.3% of fatal drowning incidents, which is higher than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (81.3%)
CPR performed (31.3%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
3.3 days



Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, older adults, and young people.
(Rate per 100,000)



25.4 Toddlers (0-4 years)



3.7 Children (5-14 years)



5.0 Young People (15-24 years)



4.9 Adults (25-64 years)



6.7 Older Adults (65+ years)

High-risk times for drowning



44.7% Summer months



56.3% Weekdays
No Public Holiday



56.3% Afternoons
12PM - 6PM

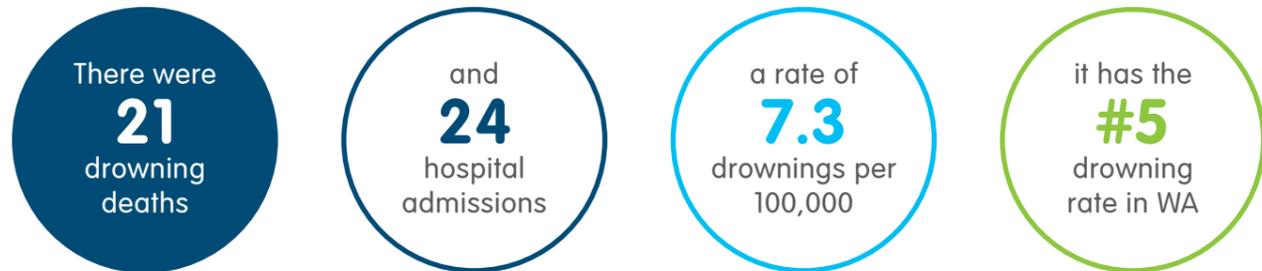
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **93.8%** Remoteness of location
- > **68.8%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **31.3%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **31.3%** Participating alone
- > **31.3%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **25.0%** Poor swimming ability
- > **18.8%** Medical condition
- > **18.8%** Low socio-economic status
- > **12.5%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **12.5%** Inexperience with activity
- > **12.5%** Flood-related



Photo: Two Peoples Bay, Albany

There were **45 drowning incidents** recorded in the Great Southern region

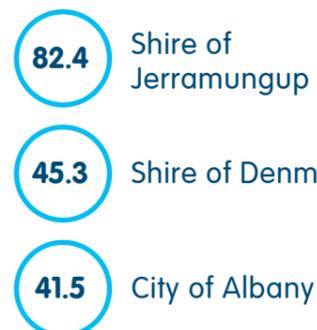


Males (95.7/100,000) were **2.2 times more likely to drown** than females (43.2/100,000)

68.9% of those who drowned in Great Southern were male



Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



68.9% were born in Australia



31.1% were born overseas



Of these, **80.0%** were from a non-English speaking country

There were no drowning incidents involving Aboriginal Australians recorded in the Great Southern region.

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 52.4% of fatal drowning incidents, which is higher than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (61.9%)
CPR performed (28.6%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
5.1 days



Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, adults and young people
(Rate per 100,000)



22.6 Toddlers (0-4 years)



1.2 Children (5-14 years)



7.4 Young People (15-24 years)



7.9 Adults (25-64 years)



4.8 Older Adults (65+ years)

High-risk times for drowning



40.0% Autumn months



52.4% Weekends
14.3% Public Holiday



30.0% Afternoons
12PM - 6PM

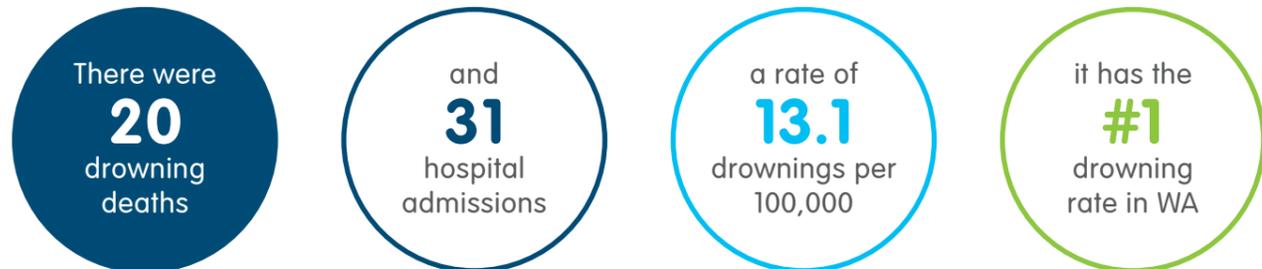
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **66.7%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **52.4%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **42.9%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **28.6%** Participating alone
- > **28.6%** Medical condition
- > **23.8%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **19.1%** Poor swimming ability
- > **9.5%** Low socio-economic status
- > **4.8%** Inexperience with activity
- > **4.8%** Remoteness of location



Photo: Fitzroy Crossing

There were **51 drowning incidents** recorded in the Kimberley region



Males (190.2.0/100,000) were **2.7 times more likely to drown** than females (70.7/100,000)

72.6% of those who drowned in Kimberley were male



Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



78.4% were born in Australia



19.6% were born overseas



Of these, **40.0%** were from a non-English speaking country

Overall, **45.1% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal Australians 1.2 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (14.6/100,000) than non-Aboriginal Australians (12.0/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 40.0% of fatal drowning incidents, which is higher than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (50.0%)
CPR performed (25.0%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
1.0 days



Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, adults, and children

(Rate per 100,000)

32.6

Toddlers (0-4 years)

8.2

Children (5-14 years)

4.9

Young People (15-24 years)

14.3

Adults (25-64 years)

8.0

Older Adults (65+ years)

High-risk times for drowning



41.2% Summer months



60.0% Weekends
No Public Holiday



30.0% Afternoons
12PM-6PM

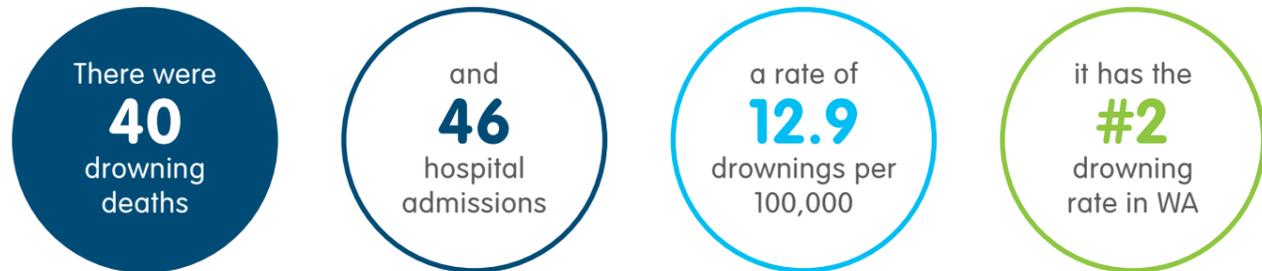
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **100.0%** Remoteness of location
- > **75.0%** Low socio-economic status
- > **70.0%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **45.0%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **30.0%** Participating alone
- > **30.0%** Medical condition
- > **20.0%** Flood-related
- > **15.0%** Injury
- > **10.0%** Poor swimming ability
- > **5.0%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **5.0%** Lack of supervision
- > **5.0%** Participating at unfamiliar locations



Photo: Coral Bay

There were **86 drowning incidents** recorded in the Midwest region



Males (189.4/100,000) were **3.2 times more likely to drown** than females (60.2/100,000)



Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



77.9% were born in Australia



20.9% were born overseas



Of these, **72.7%** were from a non-English speaking country

Overall, **11.6% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with drowning rates similar for both Aboriginal Australians (12.1/100,000) and non-Aboriginal Australians (13.0/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 52.5% of fatal drowning incidents, which is higher than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (57.5%)
CPR performed (52.5%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
1.5 days



Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, older adults, and young people
(Rate per 100,000)



High-risk times for drowning



33.7% Summer months



60.0% Weekdays
5.0% Public Holiday



45.0% Mornings
6AM - 12PM

Key risk factors for drowning

- > **77.5%** Remoteness of location
- > **47.5%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **47.5%** Medical condition
- > **42.5%** Low socio-economic status
- > **30.0%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **35.0%** Participating alone
- > **22.5%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **15.0%** Injury
- > **15.0%** Inexperience with activity
- > **12.5%** Poor swimming ability
- > **7.5%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **2.5%** Lack of supervision
- > **2.5%** Faulty or absent barrier



Photo: Port Hedland

There were **54 drowning incidents** recorded in the Pilbara region

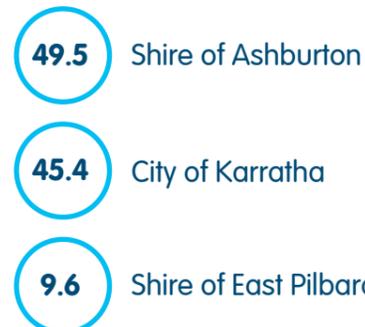


Males (106.2/100,000) were **1.4 times more likely to drown** than females (74.1/100,000)

64.8% of those who drowned in Pilbara were male



Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



77.8% were born in Australia



22.2% were born overseas



Of these, **62.5%** were from a non-English speaking country

Overall, **20.4% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal Australians 1.7 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (13.1/100,000) than non-Aboriginal Australians (7.6/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 70.6% of fatal drowning incidents, which is more than double the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (41.2%)
CPR performed (35.3%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
1.0 days

↑ Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, young people, and children (Rate per 100,000)



High-risk times for drowning



42.6% Summer months



52.9% Weekdays
No Public Holiday



35.3% Early Morning
12AM - 6AM

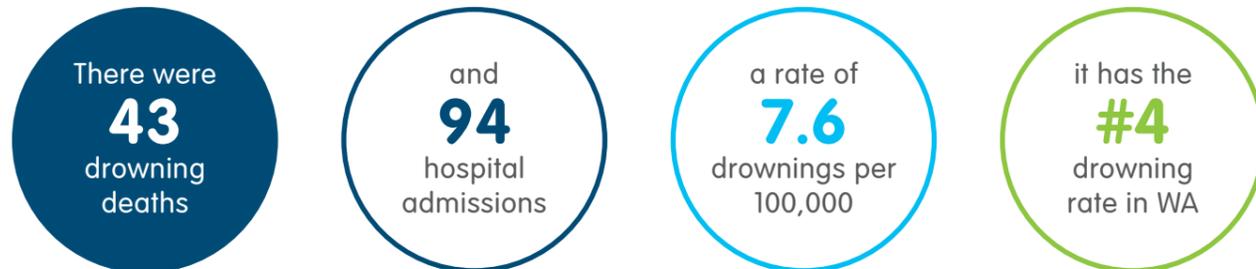
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **100.0%** Remoteness of location
- > **52.9%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **47.1%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **29.4%** Low socio-economic status
- > **29.4%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **23.5%** Participating alone
- > **23.5%** Participating alone
- > **17.7%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **17.7%** Poor swimming ability
- > **17.7%** Inexperience with activity
- > **11.8%** Injury
- > **5.9%** Medical condition
- > **5.9%** Lack of supervision
- > **5.9%** Faulty or absent barrier



Photo: Canal Rocks, Yallingup

There were **137 drowning incidents** recorded in the South West region



Males (105.9/100,000) were **3.1 times more likely to drown** than females (34.7/100,000)



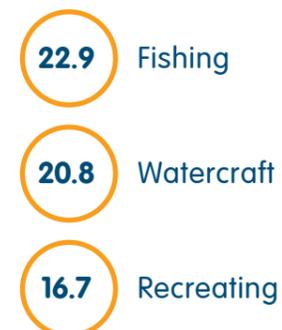
Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



81.0% were born in Australia



18.3% were born overseas



Of these, **71.4%** were from a non-English speaking country

Overall, **3.7% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal Australians 1.7 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (12.3/100,000) than non-Aboriginal Australians (7.4/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 53.5% of fatal drowning incidents, which is higher than the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (62.8%)
CPR performed (44.2%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
4.7 days



Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, adults, and young people
(Rate per 100,000)



High-risk times for drowning



40.9% Summer months



62.8% Weekdays
2.3% Public Holiday



39.5% Afternoons
12PM - 6PM

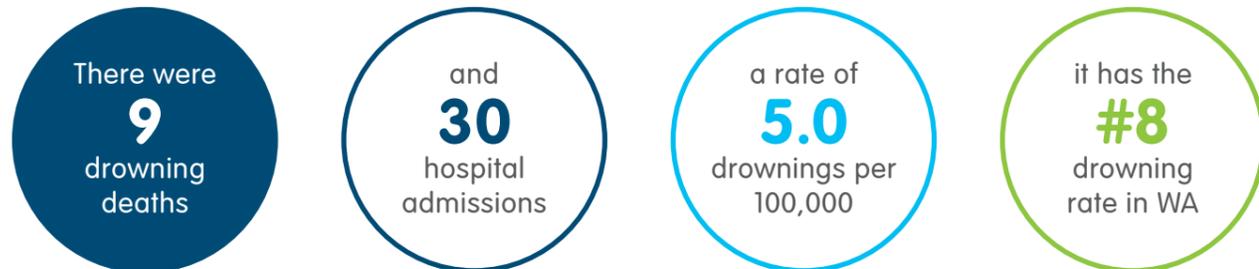
Key risk factors for drowning

- > **44.2%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **39.5%** Participating alone
- > **30.2%** Medical condition
- > **27.9%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **27.9%** Low socio-economic status
- > **20.9%** Lack of safety equipment including lifejacket use
- > **16.3%** Injury
- > **14.0%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)
- > **14.0%** Poor swimming ability
- > **9.3%** Inexperience with activity
- > **4.7%** Remoteness of location
- > **4.7%** Lack of supervision
- > **2.3%** Faulty or absent barrier
- > **2.3%** Flood-related



Photo: Moore River

There were **39 drowning incidents** recorded in the Wheatbelt region

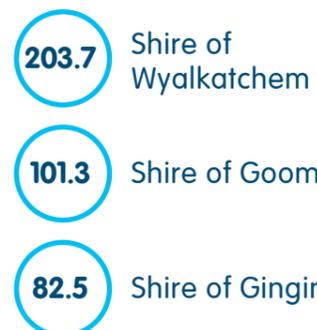


Males (66.7/100,000) were **2.1 times more likely to drown** than females (31.6/100,000)

69.2% of those who drowned in Wheatbelt were male



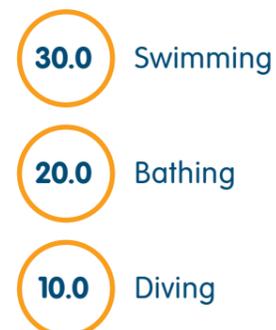
Top 3 local areas (per 100,000)



Top 3 locations (%)



Top 3 activities (%)



79.5% were born in Australia



20.5% were born overseas



Of these, **66.7%** were from a non-English speaking country

Overall, **5.1% of people who drowned were Aboriginal**, with Aboriginal Australians 1.2 times more likely to be involved in a drowning incident (5.9/100,000) than non-Aboriginal Australians (5.0/100,000).

Tourists and/or visitors to the area were involved in 66.7% of fatal drowning incidents, which is more than double the state average (31.8%).

Rescue Attempted (44.4%)
CPR performed (33.3%)

Av. length of hospital stay (non-fatal)
4.4 days



Drowning risk was greatest amongst toddlers, young people, and older adults
(Rate per 100,000)



17.9 Toddlers (0-4 years)



3.0 Children (5-14 years)



7.0 Young People (15-24 years)



3.8 Adults (25-64 years)



3.8 Older Adults (65+ years)

High-risk times for drowning



35.9% Summer months



55.6% Weekdays
11.1% Public Holiday



44.4% Afternoons
12PM - 6PM

Key risk factors for drowning

- > **66.7%** Participating alone
- > **44.4%** Poor swimming ability
- > **44.4%** Low socio-economic status
- > **33.3%** Medical condition
- > **33.3%** Environmental factors such as poor weather/water conditions
- > **22.2%** Participating at unfamiliar locations
- > **22.2%** Lack of supervision
- > **22.2%** Inexperience with activity
- > **11.1%** Flood-related
- > **11.1%** Remoteness of location
- > **11.1%** Consumption of alcohol (BAC >0.05)



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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