Lifeboats

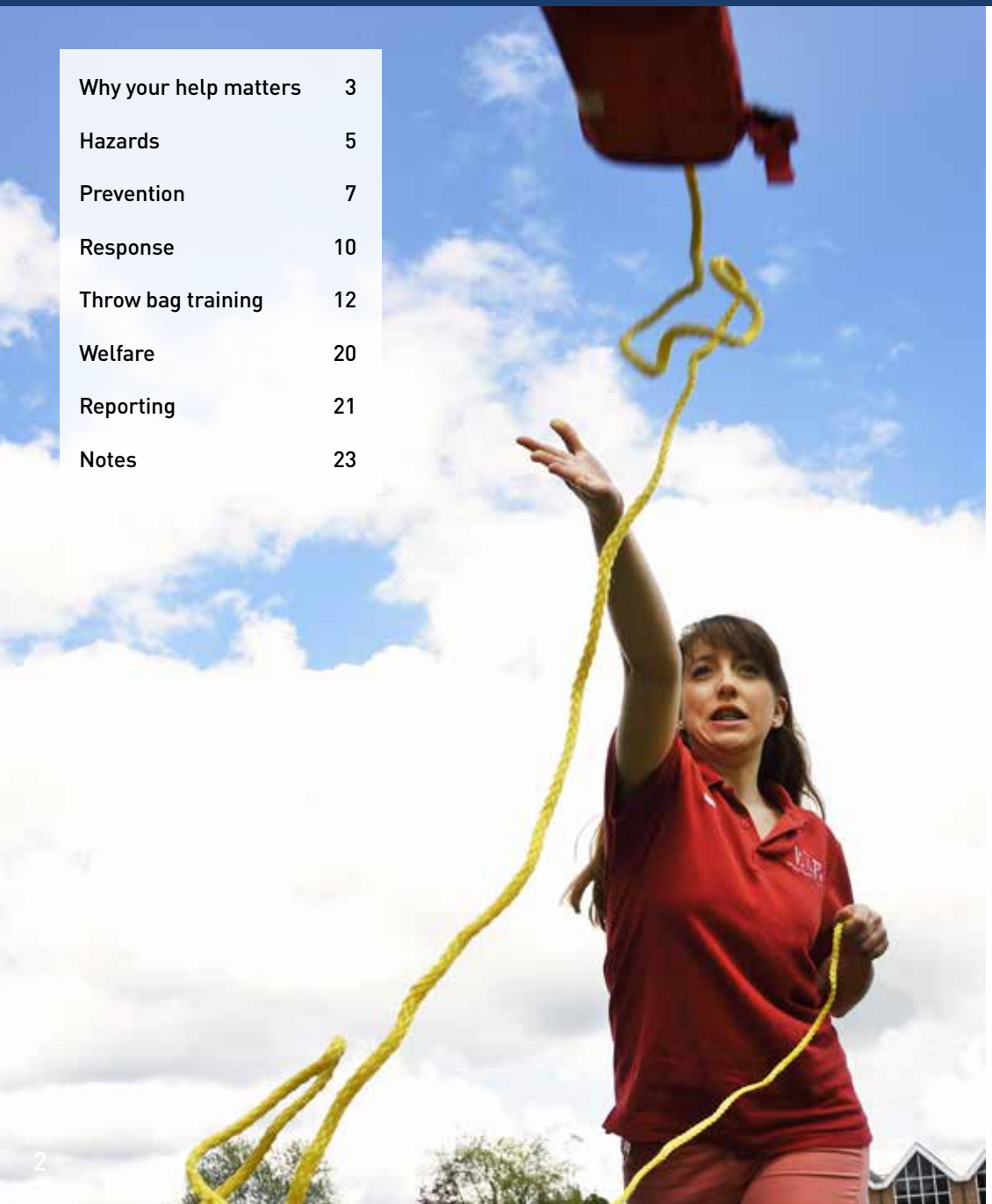
WATERSIDE RESPONDER SCHEME INSTRUCTION MANUAL

GUIDANCE



CONTENTS

Why your help matters	3
Hazards	5
Prevention	7
Response	10
Throw bag training	12
Welfare	20
Reporting	21
Notes	23



WHY YOUR HELP MATTERS

Each year, around 300* people die in and around the water in the UK through accidental and natural causes, and in the Republic of Ireland there are 69 accidental drownings. These tragic incidents can happen all year round. It's estimated that a large percentage of those who lose their lives in water die before the alarm is raised.**

We, as professional search and rescue (SAR) responders are pretty successful at rescuing most people who are rescuable, but we can't do anything about incidents we don't know about. Even if we do know about them, in many cases we may not be able to get there in time. Some drownings and fatalities are related to the night-time economy (such as bars, clubs and restaurants), and many involve alcohol.

If somebody gets into difficulty in water that's not normally used for swimming or leisure activities, specialist help is often unavailable. However, specially trained hospitality staff, security staff and waterside community members could provide help in an emergency.

This programme is about equipping people who work near water – especially where a lot of alcohol is consumed – with the basic knowledge and skills to be confident to take action to save a life.

This training programme will give you the basic knowledge and skills you need to:

- recognise hazards in and around water
- provide safety advice to people using waterside areas
- rescue someone from the water.

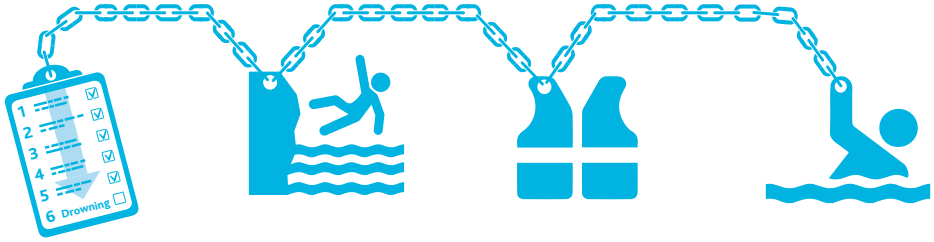
If a venue is identified as legally requiring their staff to be trained in waterside rescue, they should be referred to the RLSS in order for their staff to gain the required formal qualification.

* Figures represent an average provided by WAID UK, inland and coastal fatalities – accidental and natural causes only (2014–18 WAID average).
** Figures represent an average provided by Irish Water Safety (2014–18 Irish Water Safety average).
Note: 2016, 2017 and 2018 are provisional and could be subject to revision.

HAZARDS

THE DROWNING CHAIN

Why are people dying in the water?
There are some key links in the chain that lead to drowning:



Preventing drowning is not a priority.

Places are not safe/people are isolated.

People cannot – or do not – behave safely.

People cannot look after – or save – themselves.

Key terms:

- **The water:** the sea, rivers, canals, lakes, docks and other sections of water.
- **Casualty:** the person who needs help.
- **Rescuer:** the person trying to help.
- **Emergency services:** ambulance, coastguard, fire and rescue service, and police.
- **RNLI:** The Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

COLD WATER

Even on a warm day, water can be dangerously cold. Cold water can steal the air from a casualty's lungs and leave them unable to swim and stay afloat.

There are three main dangers of cold water, which are all exacerbated if the casualty has consumed alcohol:

1. **Cold water shock:** Initial submersion in water that's less than 15ºC can cause uncontrollable gasping, then hyperventilation. This often means the casualty will inhale water. They may also suffer muscle cramps that make it impossible to move. Cold water shock can also rapidly increase blood pressure, leading to a stroke or cardiac arrest. Most deaths would occur in the cold water shock stage.

2. **Mid-term immersion:** If the casualty survives the initial cold water shock, which can last a couple of minutes, they will start to get very cold. As their muscle temperature drops, they will lose strength and coordination. This means they may be unable to swim or to grasp lifelines, ropes, lifebuoys or other objects.

3. **Long-term immersion (and hypothermia):** If the casualty is in the water for more than 30 minutes, their body temperature may drop below 35°C (normal temperature is 37°C). This is known as hypothermia. A person with hypothermia will become exhausted and uncoordinated, eventually becoming unresponsive. An unconscious person in the water will drown.

FAST FLOWING WATER

River and tidal water moves fast and is extremely strong. It is powerful and relentless, but this is not always obvious on the surface.

Many rivers flow at up to 2m per second, but they can be up to 3m per second – that's faster than an Olympic swimmer. Even a confident swimmer will be at the mercy of the current very quickly. That's why it's better to go with the flow of the current, not against it. Often, especially on straight stretches of water, objects (including people) are swept away from the edge and towards the faster-flowing middle.

OBJECTS IN THE WATER

Fallen trees, submerged rubbish, boats (and their chains, ropes and anchors), rocks and bridges are common hazards in inland water.

A casualty may be injured or trapped if they come into contact with such an object. However, they may also find it possible to cling to the object and await help. It depends on the casualty's condition and the force of the water.

CONTAMINATED WATER

Bodies of water may contain sewage, harmful algae, litter, parasites, viruses, agricultural waste and chemical waste.

Contaminated water can affect a casualty if swallowed, or simply through contact with the skin, eyes, mouth and nose. It can even be fatal. If you've come into contact with any dirty water (even if it's just by touching a wet casualty), wash yourself thoroughly with clean water and soap. If you become ill or develop a rash, seek immediate medical attention.

DEPTH

Water depth can change with the tide, so the water may be shallower than it looks.

The difference between high tide and low tide can be significant and water that's deep at one time of the day may not be hours later – or at the same time on a different day. Submerged items may not be visible and can cause serious injury or paralysis if you hit them.

REMEMBER: All casualties who've been in the water must be checked by a medical professional, even if they seem fine. Waterborne illnesses and secondary drowning can and regularly do prove fatal.

Each year, around 300* people die in and around the water in the UK through accidental and natural causes, and in the Republic of Ireland there are 69 accidental drownings. These tragic incidents can happen all year round. It's estimated that a large percentage of those who lose their lives in water die before the alarm is raised.**

There are many reasons why people enter the water. By identifying those at risk, engaging with them and building a rapport, you have the opportunity to provide tailored safety messages that may prevent them from going into the water in the first place.



People cannot – or do not – behave safely.



* Figures represent an average provided by WAID UK, Inland and Coastal fatalities - accidental and natural causes only (2014–2018 WAID average)

** Figures represent an average provided by Irish Water Safety (2014 – 2018 Irish Water Safety average) note 2016,2017,2018 are provisional and could be subject to revision

AISDA MODEL

This AISDA model is a great tool for helping you to have a well-structured conversation that gives tailored advice:

ATTENTION – Engage with the public and start a conversation

Body language – look approachable and friendly
Timing – engage early, don't wait for them to walk past!
Your opening line – what are you going to say, and how?

INTEREST – Build rapport and get their interest

Ask questions – find out about them
Build rapport – be relatable and earn their trust
Find the link – how can you create buy in?

SAFETY – Give tailored safety messages

Use what you know about the person – give information that is relevant
Be interactive – fun = memorable (particularly with children)
Don't blag it – work with your colleagues to find a solution

DESIRE – Make them understand why they should take action

Tell them why you are there – people don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it. For us at the RNLI the why is very easy: to save more lives around the water. For the participant it is to get more out of their activity by avoiding the pitfalls and keeping themselves safe. Use personal or local stories to create desire to change their actions.

ACTION – Give them action to take

Just ask – get them to take some accountability
Keep it simple

There are many reasons why people may enter the water, or contemplate doing so:

- For a bet or a dare or just as a way to impress friends
- To cool off on a hot day or night
- Slips, trips or falls – these are more likely when alcohol is involved
- Personal or psychological issues.

For further information and support – to identify when someone is presenting with suicidal thoughts and behaviour – refer to the Zero Suicide Alliance. They provide free suicide prevention training that is accessible to all.

The aims of this training are to enable people to speak out in a supportive manner, and to empower them to signpost an individual to the correct services or support.

Visit **zerosuicidealliance.com** for more information.



RESPONSE

AS SOON AS YOU SEE A PERSON IN THE WATER, CALL 999 or 112 FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES.

Rescuers will always need backup, and the casualty may need urgent medical assistance. Do not wait until you have rescued the casualty to call the emergency services.



EMERGENCY MOBILE PHONE CALLING PROCEDURE

- **Dial 999 or 112** and ask for the relevant emergency service
- Describe your **location**
- Describe the **number of people** in trouble
- Describe **the problem**
- Give any **additional information.**

If you see anyone in trouble in the water, **call the emergency services immediately: CALL 999 or 112.** If you're by the sea, ask for the Coastguard.

Then begin the following rescue steps (presented in order, with the safest first):

TALK ▶ **REACH** ▶ **THROW**

TALK

Talk to the casualty. Tell them to:

- float
- stop struggling or thrashing about
- not to try to take their clothes off
- lie back and extend their legs and arms
- move their arms gently in the water
- float until they can control their breathing
- once breathing is under control then try to swim or keep floating until help arrives.

Let them know you're trying to help. Simple instructions can guide the casualty to a safe place, or direct them to use the rescue equipment you provide. This can sometimes be all that's needed for a successful rescue.

▼

REACH

If you have a long pole, length of pipe or similar object, you may be able to reach out to the casualty and pull them to shore. If possible, get someone to help and hold you, so that you do not fall into the water and get pulled in by the casualty. When the casualty grabs the line the change in tension may take you by surprise.

Do not go in the water yourself, even the shallows. Before you reach out, ensure you are in a stable, secure position and cannot be pulled into the water.

▼

THROW

Using a throw bag or rope if you have one, throw the line towards the casualty while holding the tail end of the line in your other hand. Aim to get the line to land across the casualty's body.

Be aware of your environment when throwing – look out for overhead power lines and boats.

THROW BAG TRAINING

30 MINUTES

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEPLOYING A THROWLINE

Select a good site:

- For your safety, standing behind railings or a barrier would be ideal, so long as there's somewhere to land the casualty.
- Choose a safe area to land the casualty out of the strong flow and somewhere the casualty can be recovered from the water (free from entanglement and entrapment hazards).
- If you throw from here, where will the throw bag land in relation to the casualty?
- Could dropping the throw bag from the downstream side of a bridge be a better option?

Clean line principle:

- Appropriate length of line.
- Neat coils.
- No tangles.
- Watch out for knots, bights and loops.
- Do not loop the line around your hand.

Good stance:

- Good, secure footing – not slippery or unstable.
- Strong, comfortable body position.
- Get someone to hold you, if possible.
- Do not stand in rope loops.
- Brace yourself as the rope becomes taut and the weight of the casualty comes onto the line.

Types of throw:

- Over arm.
- Under arm.
- Side arm.
- Drop bag.

Timing of throw:

- Aim by pointing your throwing arm in the direction of the casualty.
- In moving water, the casualty is likely to be a moving target. Aim to land the line across their torso and slightly downstream in case you miss.
- Aim for within 1m of the casualty.
- If possible, encourage the casualty to swim towards the line.

Communication with casualty:

- Talk to the casualty and remind them to keep calm, relax and let them know you are there to help.
- Shout 'SWIMMER – ROPE!' so the casualty in the water knows to expect it.
- If there's time, show them the rope to make sure they understand.
- Once you have thrown the throw bag and the casualty has (hopefully) made contact, the line will get heavier due to shock load. You must control it by using both hands, adjusting your hand position to increase or decrease the friction.
- Then tell the casualty to face away from the rescuer, lie on their back and hold the rope over their shoulder and across their chest, otherwise the casualty can be drawn under the water and they then let go.



Throwing again:

- If your first attempt misses, you can redeploy the line quickly. Don't attempt to fully repack the bag.
- Instead, bring the line back into your hand in a back-and-forth manner, making short loops. This should allow you to accurately throw the line again.
- If you can, weight the bag with water (if safe to do so).

Landing the casualty:

- You must identify a suitable area to bring the casualty on to land. The best landing area will depend on your surroundings.
- You must make sure that you, the rescuer, will be safe and secure on this landing area too – do not get pulled into the water.
- Remember that a casualty is likely to be tired, cold and not fully able to help themselves – ladders might be too difficult for them.
- It is important that all immersion casualties seek professional medical attention after they've been recovered from the water. Immersion casualties should not be left alone for 24 hours after the incident.





1 ATTRACT ATTENTION

Shout out to the casualty to get their attention. Tell them to float, and then tell them you're going to throw a line.



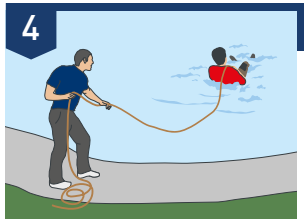
2 THROW BAG

Using a throw bag if you have one, throw the line towards the casualty while holding the tail end of the line in your other hand. Aim to get the line to land across the casualty's body. Be aware of your environment when throwing – look out for overhead power lines and boats.

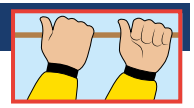


3 GIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Shout to the casualty: 'Hold onto the line,' followed by: 'Roll onto your back,' then: 'Put the line over your shoulder.' Be prepared for shock loading. Move downstream to reduce this and find a suitable recovery location.



4 PULL ON LINE





Pull the casualty towards you using both hands. Just before they reach the side tell them to roll onto their front so they don't bang their head.

Never wrap the rope around your hand.



5 HELP OUT OF WATER

Get hold of the casualty and assist them out of the water, using whatever safe means is available. Be aware that the casualty may be cold, wet, heavy and distressed, making them hard to hold on to. If you are unable to assist them out of the water without putting yourself at risk, instruct them to float. Then shout for help, wait for more rescuers to arrive.

Illustrations: RNLI/Andy Perryman

THROW BAG REPACK

Throw bags are used in emergencies so must be ready for immediate use. Know where yours is stored, and check it regularly.

Here's how to properly repack your throw bag:

1. Unpack the bag to inspect the line fully. Do this as part of your throwing practice to refine your technique.
2. Check that the line is threaded through both holes at the base of the bag and tied with a rethreaded figure of 8 knot.
3. Repack by feeding the line straight into the bag; over the shoulder can be easier for some people.
4. While doing this, check for any abrasions, cuts or lumps in the line. If there is wear, it should be cut and discarded immediately.
5. Leave the tail accessible but well secured so it cannot come undone.



THROW BAG STORAGE

'I know my throw bag is around here somewhere...'

Owning a throw bag, but not having it instantly available makes it useless. You can waste vital time trying to find it.

1. Always store your throw bag in a safe, designated place. This ensures everyone who may need it knows where it is.
2. If you notice it's missing, do something positive to help locate it. If you can't, make sure you notify someone who can sort out the problem.



THROW BAG MAINTENANCE

Throwlines need to be in good condition to be effective in an emergency. The following steps are recommended to maintain your throw bag.

- Rinse with fresh water after, if possible. Dry somewhere that has easy access and, if possible, out of direct sunlight to avoid degradation of the rope.
- When rinsed and dry, repack as guided, so it's ready for use.

The RNLI will supply the throw bag(s) free of charge to the premises, at a date and time agreed withvenue manager during training. The venue agrees to undertake responsibility and liability for storing and maintaining the throw bag(s):

1. To fix and store the throw bag(s) at the premises in a location that trained staff can easily access.
2. To provide maintenance according to the supplier's instructions.
3. To order replacement throw bag(s) from the RNLI (free of charge), if any are damaged, lost or stolen.



survitecgroup

Crewsaver Throw Bags



Part code
6222-15M
6222-20M
6222-25M

For use in rescue situations. The bullet bag design ensures a long and accurate throw with the ability to recover and re-throw if the target is missed.

Available packed with 8mm rope in 15, 20 and 25m lengths.

- Tough polyester construction
- Includes belt

Maintenance

It is recommended that the Throw bag should be visually inspected every 6 months.
If the bag and line is dirty it may be hand washed in cool fresh water (40 C) (Do not use any detergent).
Hang up and allow to dry naturally.
Ensure that there is no damage to the outer bag or fraying to the line.
Check the security of the knots
Any signs of damage to the product, it should not be used.

After use

- **The following checks must be carried out after the throw bag has been used.**

1. **Check the line for fraying**
2. **Check the security of all fastenings**
3. **Check the security of the knots**
4. **Ensure line is flaked correctly**



Ensure that there are no knots in the line and it is dry, place the bag on a flat surface and the rope a long side.



Slowly flake the rope back into the bag. This will ensure that the line does not tangle when thrown.



Once you have flaked the full length of the rope into the bag, re-seal the bag, leaving the end of the line outside.

Survitec Service & Distribution Ltd T/A Crewsaver:
Survitec House, Lederle Lane, Gosport, Hampshire. PO13 0FZ United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 13 2982 0000
Fax: +44 (0) 13 2923 6218

A part of the Survitec Group

Registered Office: 1-5 Beaufort Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH41 1HQ. Registered in England No. 553893

WELFARE

This training has equipped you with the skills and knowledge to respond to emergency situations. Being involved in emergency situations can be traumatic, so it's important that you look out for yourself and your colleagues.

People who experience traumatic events often go through a range of emotions, from mild to extreme. Some may find that the incident has very little effect on them, while others may experience a strong reaction. These reactions can have a big impact on their lives.

It's common for people to have recurrent, unwanted images and thoughts about the incident. Feelings of being angry, emotionally numb or upset about the incident are also common reactions. These symptoms are our normal way of reacting to an abnormal event.

Mostly, these symptoms resolve over a few weeks or months. On rare occasions, the symptoms do not disappear, and people suffer for much longer-term conditions. Remembering the incident or having the occasional dream about it doesn't indicate that you're unwell. If the symptoms you have interfere with your normal functioning, you should seek help. In most cases, this help can be sought through your GP or the Occupational Health Department at your work.

There are other things that can help you. Spend time with friends, family and people you trust. Maintain a normal routine that includes moderate exercise and a well-balanced diet. Talk to people you trust about what you are thinking or feeling.

REPORTING

REPORTING INCIDENTS

At the RNLI, we like to share the experiences of real people who benefit from our services as it demonstrates the importance of our work and raises awareness of our safety messages. Sharing a rescue story or prevention of a rescue could help save lives by inspiring others to stay safe around the water or by encouraging donations to fund our vital lifesaving work.

If you have a story to share, or one of the venues you have story to share visit **RNLI.org/YourStory** or contact your RNLI representative.



NOTES

ONGOING CONTACT

For any follow up questions or additional training please contact:

Alternatively please email **waterside_responder@rnli.org.uk**

Lifeboats

The RNLI shall not be liable for any acts or omissions of the rescuer while using a throw bag.

Photos: Laura Lewis, RNLI/(Nigel Millard, Nathan Williams)

SAP CODE XXXXXX

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea
Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603), Scotland (SC037736), the Republic of Ireland (20003326), the Bailiwick of Jersey (14), the Isle of Man, the Bailiwick of Guernsey and Alderney