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**Media Release**

For immediate release



## High Drowning Toll in October

Water Safety New Zealand (WSNZ) has released drowning data for the month of October. There were 15 drownings for the month. The five year average (2004-08) for October is 10 deaths. Over the last 10 years, only 2006 had a toll as high for the month of October.

The noticeable statistics in this year's October toll is the high number of powered boating drowning deaths, along with a high number of males drowning. October accounted for 42% of all powered boating drowning deaths this year, all of which were males over the age of 45 years. Matt Claridge, General Manager of WSNZ, remarks "disappointingly the lack of lifejackets was a common factor throughout."

14 of the 15 drownings in October were males.

Claridge continues, "the major concern is the high number of boating related incidents. In these instances preparation, planning and skipper responsibility would ordinarily minimise risk of the occurrence of these tragedies."

"History suggests boating activity will increase dramatically between now and March. The emerging trend of boating incidents can be negated through skipper responsibility and the basics, like wearing lifejackets and taking a Coastguard Boating Education Course."

...Ends...

**For more information or interview contact**

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