



2011 Drowning Report



 **Water
Safety**
NEW ZEALAND



WATER SAFETY NEW ZEALAND

Water Safety New Zealand (WSNZ) is an incorporated charitable society that leads water safety education, awareness and prevention for the community.

Vision

Everyone in New Zealand will have the water safe skills and behaviours necessary to use and enjoy the water.

Mission

Through water safety education, prevent injury and drowning.

WHAT IS DROWNING?

Drowning is the process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion/immersion in liquid. (International Life Saving Federation, 2002).

In effect, drowning occurs by submerging and suffocating in water or another liquid.

DROWNBASE

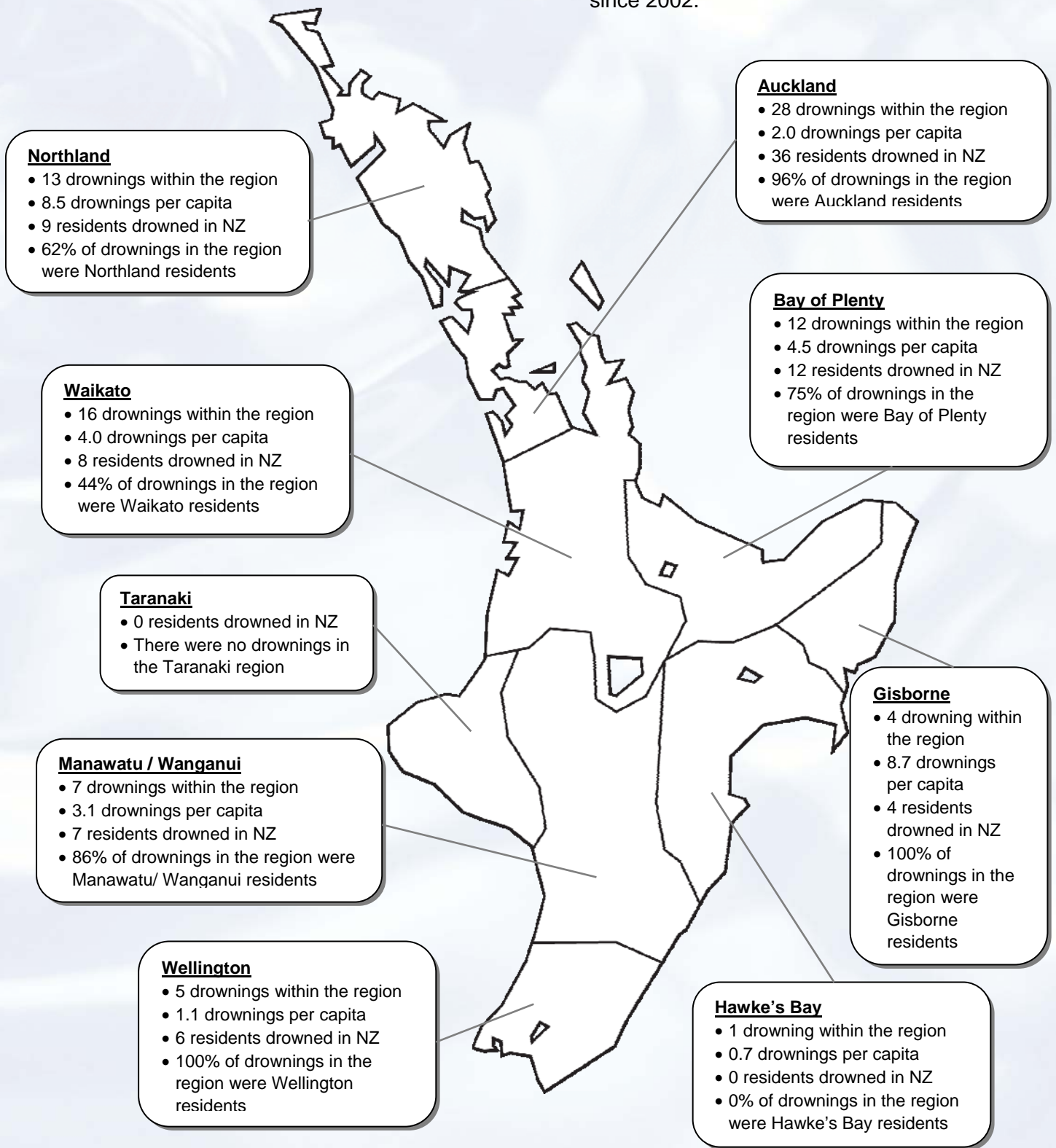
All drowning incidents in New Zealand are recorded in DrownBase™. DrownBase™ is the world's leading drowning database. All drowning data is provisional until coronial inquests are completed.

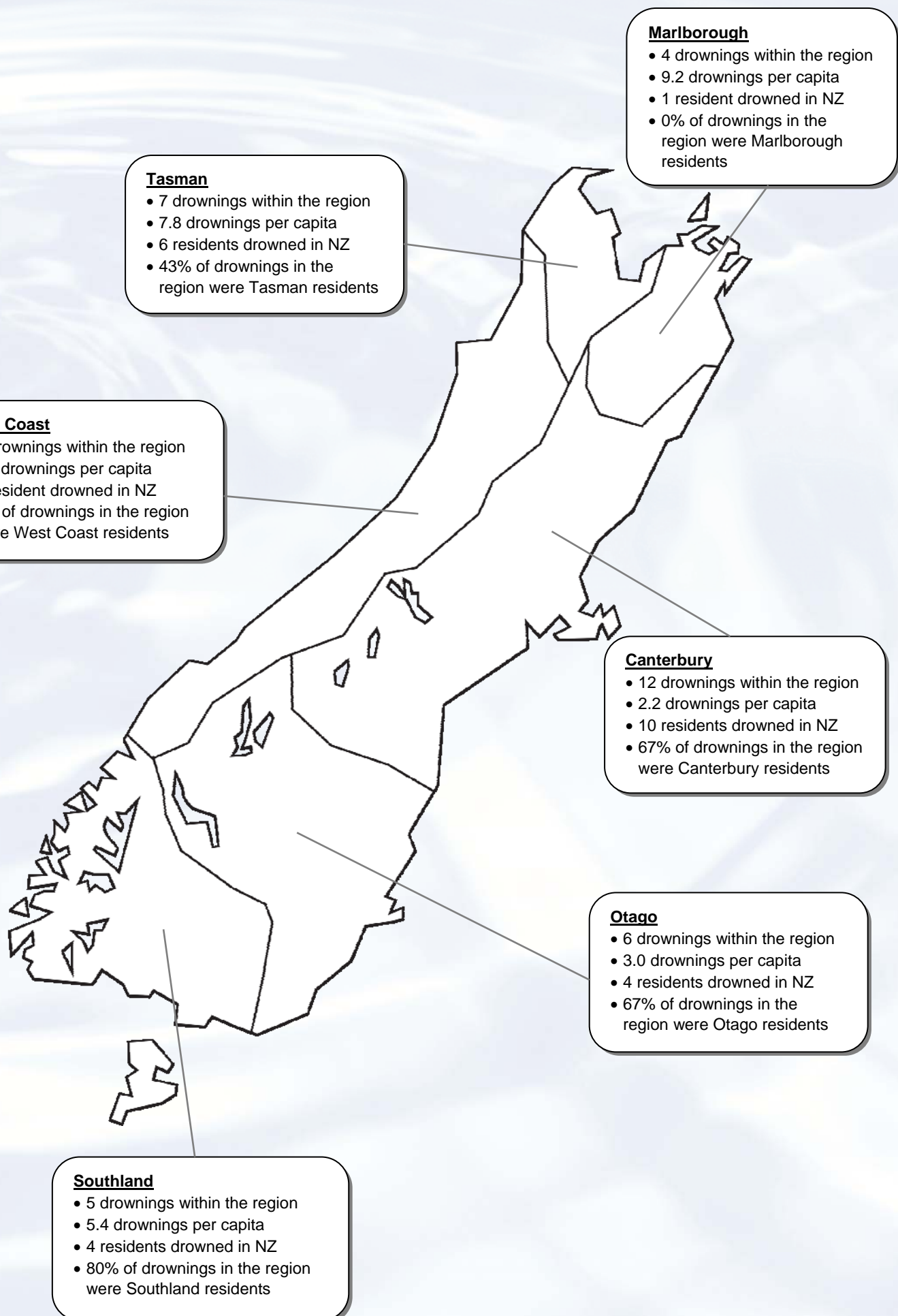
DrownBase™ records all mortality (fatality) data since 1980 and all morbidity (hospitalisation) data since 2003 in New Zealand

2011 drowning data is compared against the five year average, 2006-2010.

123 PEOPLE DROWNED DURING 2011

- This is the highest annual toll since 2003.
- This is a 41% increase from the 2010 toll (87).
- Nine Regions (Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Tasman, Marlborough, Canterbury and Southland) had increased drowning tolls from 2010.
- New Zealand's per capita toll for 2011 was 2.9.
- Auckland recorded its highest drowning toll since 2002.





Marlborough

- 4 drownings within the region
- 9.2 drownings per capita
- 1 resident drowned in NZ
- 0% of drownings in the region were Marlborough residents

Tasman

- 7 drownings within the region
- 7.8 drownings per capita
- 6 residents drowned in NZ
- 43% of drownings in the region were Tasman residents

West Coast

- 3 drownings within the region
- 9.3 drownings per capita
- 1 resident drowned in NZ
- 0% of drownings in the region were West Coast residents

Canterbury

- 12 drownings within the region
- 2.2 drownings per capita
- 10 residents drowned in NZ
- 67% of drownings in the region were Canterbury residents

Otago

- 6 drownings within the region
- 3.0 drownings per capita
- 4 residents drowned in NZ
- 67% of drownings in the region were Otago residents

Southland

- 5 drownings within the region
- 5.4 drownings per capita
- 4 residents drowned in NZ
- 80% of drownings in the region were Southland residents

Note: 9 drownings were recorded with Unknown NZ residences and 6 with foreign residences

MORTALITY (Fatalities)

WHERE ARE PEOPLE DROWNING?

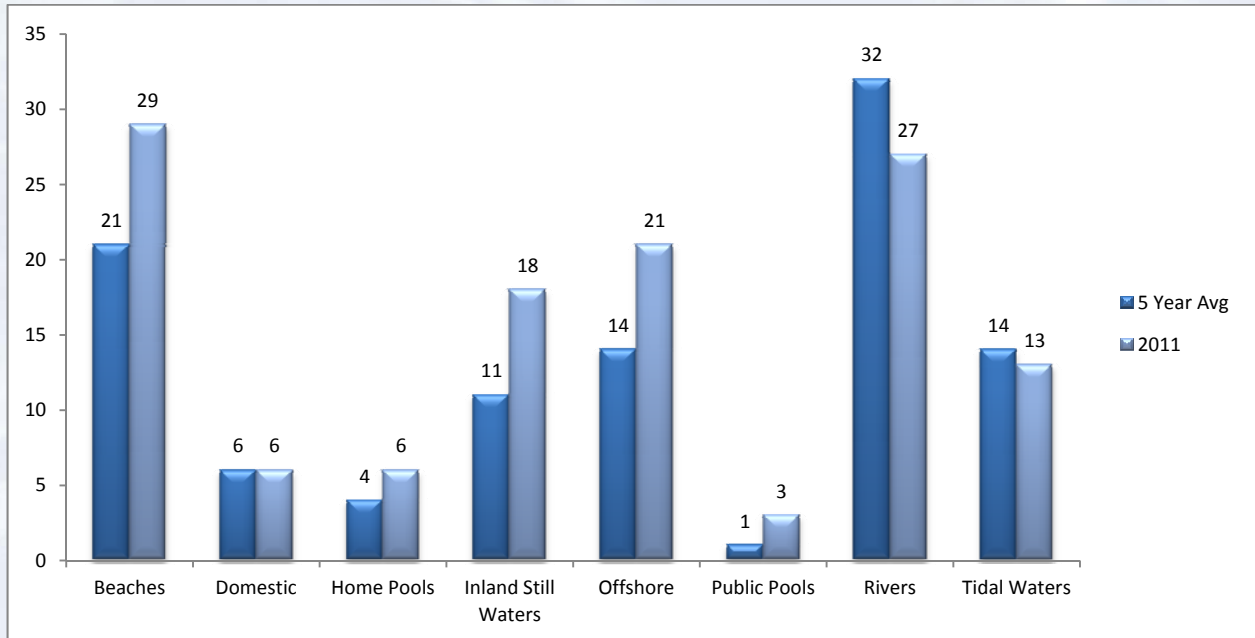


Figure 1. Drowning Deaths by Environment—Five Year Average and 2011

Beaches were the most dangerous environment in 2011 with 29 fatalities. This is a 38% increase on the five year average. *Rivers* - which had the most drownings in 2008, 2009 and 2010 - has decreased from the five year average by 16%.

Drownings increased from the five year average in *Home Pools* (by 50%), *Inland Still Waters* (by 64%), *Offshore* (by 50%) and *Public Pools* (by 200%).

Drownings in *Domestic* settings (including Baths, Buckets and other domestic locations) and *Tidal Waters* (including Harbours, Marinas, Estuaries and River/Harbour bars) have remained static.



WHAT ACTIVITIES WERE VICTIMS UNDERTAKING PRIOR TO DROWNING?

When recording data of what the deceased was doing at the time of death, WSNZ classifies incidents into one of three categories – *Recreational*, *Non Recreational* and *Other Activity*.

Recreational activities are those where the victim intended to be in the water for recreational purposes e.g. fishing, sailing, swimming and diving.

Non Recreational is where the victim had no intention of being in the water for recreational purposes e.g. Immersion Incidents and Occupational Related drownings.

Other Activity includes Suicide, Homicide and Road Vehicle incidents.

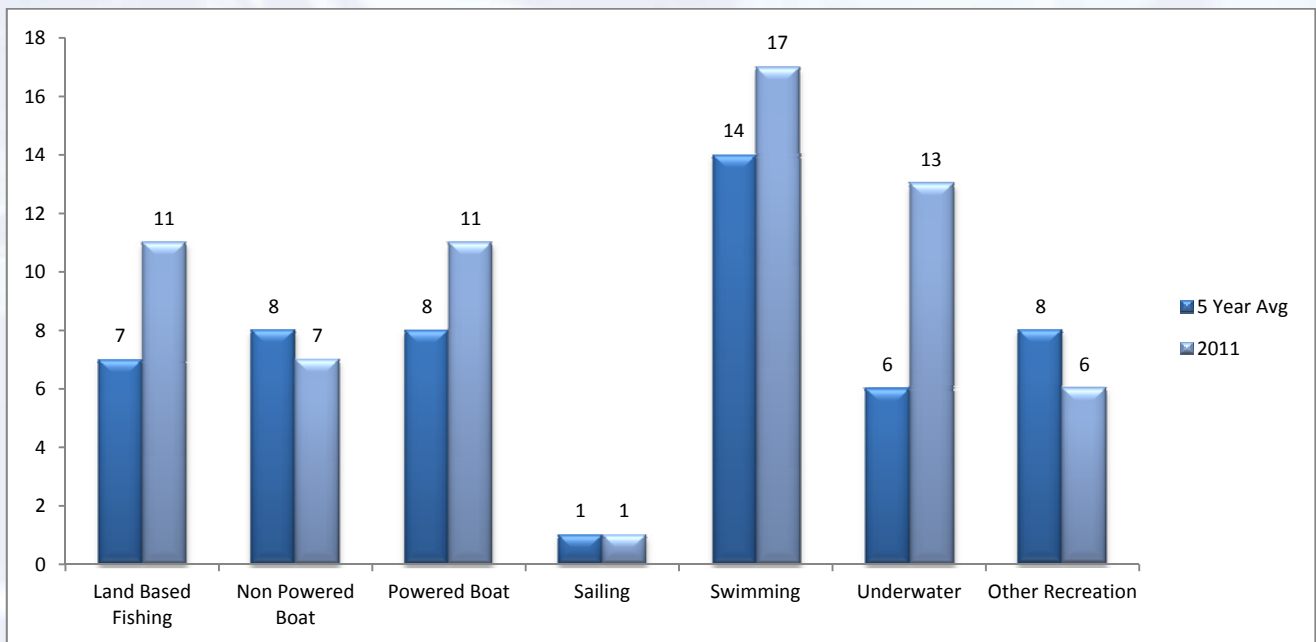


Figure 2. Drowning Deaths by Recreational Activity—Five Year Average and 2011

In 2011 there were 66 *Recreational* drownings, 24 *Non Recreational* drownings and 33 recorded as *Other Activities*.

Swimming had the highest recreational drowning toll of 17 in 2011 – this is equal to the 2010 toll. It is an increase 21% on the five year average.

Underwater related activities such as Free Diving, Snorkeling, and Scuba Diving recorded 13 drownings. This is an increase of 117% from the five year average. In particular in this category, there were five Free Diving deaths in 2011 – the five year average is just one per year.

Land Based Fishing and *Powered Boating* drownings also increased on their five year averages by 57% and 38% respectively.

Non Powered Boating and *Other Recreation* (such as Board Riding, Diving/Jumping etc) recorded slight decreases on their five year averages.



WHO DROWNS IN NEW ZEALAND?

AGE GROUPS

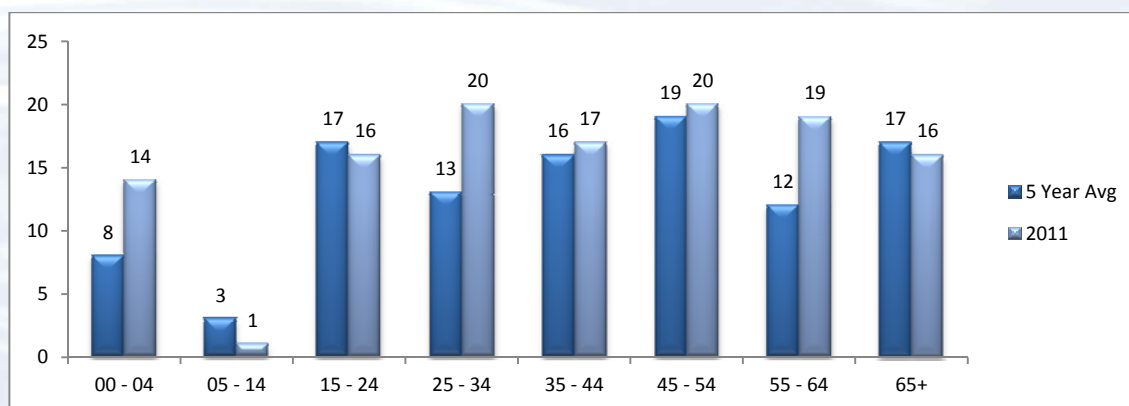


Figure 3. Drowning Deaths by Age Group – Five Year Average and 2011

There were 14 drownings of Pre-Schoolers (Under 5's) in 2011 – this is the highest since 2002 and an increase on the five year average by 75%.

There were also large increases on the five year average in the 25-34 (by 54%) and 55-64 (by 58%) age groups. The 25-34 age group jumped from four drowning deaths in 2010 to 20 in 2011. The 55-64 age group recorded a record high toll of 19 drownings in 2011.

The school aged children drowning toll continues to be encouragingly low, dropping by 67% on the five year average in the 5-14 age group.

The 15-24, 35-44, 45-54 and 65+ age groups remain fairly static on their five year averages.

ETHNICITY

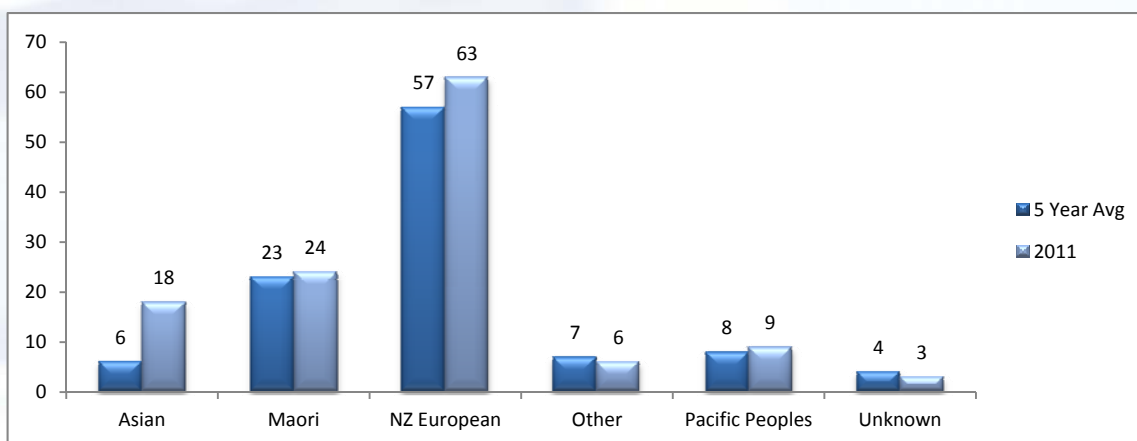


Figure 4. Drowning Deaths by Ethnicity – Five Year Average and 2011

NZ Europeans accounted for 51% of the 2011 drowning toll.

20% of drowning victims were Maori. This is lower than the five year average of 22%, but continues to highlight years of overrepresentation for Maori in drowning statistics. Maori constitute 15% of the population*.

*2006 New Zealand Census

2011 had the highest number of Asian drownings on record. At 18, this is triple the five year average.

The drowning toll of Others (non-residents, tourists etc from the rest of the world) was slightly lower than the five year average.

GENDER

80% (98) of drowning victims in 2011 were male. This is an increase from the five year average of 76%. 98 drownings is the highest male toll since 2002. Of the record 2011 high of 19 drownings within the 55-64 age group, 18 (95%) were male.

WHEN ARE PEOPLE DROWNING?

The months of January (20), February (22), April (14) and December (14) had the highest number of fatalities; traditionally January, February and December are the highest months. The five year average is 16 for January, 12 for February and 11 for December. April had an unusually high number of drownings – the five year average for April is nine.

There were three drownings in the month of March (the five year average for March is seven).

WHICH REGIONS HAVE THE HIGHEST TOLL PER CAPITA?

The following table indicates the top regions for drowning on a per capita (n=100,000) basis in 2011:

Rank	Region	Drowning Deaths per Capita
1	West Coast	9.3
2	Marlborough	9.2
3	Gisborne	8.7
4	Northland	8.5
5	Nelson/Tasman	7.8
6	Southland	5.4
7	Bay of Plenty	4.5
7	Waikato	4.0
9	Manawatu/Wanganui	3.1
10	Otago	3.0

New Zealand's five year average drowning toll (2007-2011) on a per capita basis is 2.7 deaths per 100,000 people.

Acknowledgement

WSNZ gratefully acknowledges the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board for its ongoing support of water safety education, awareness and prevention in New Zealand.



QUICK FACTS

Mortality Toll Breakdown	2011		5 Year Average (2006-2010)	
Activity				
<i>Recreational Drownings</i>				
Swimming	17	(14%)	14	(13%)
Underwater activities	13	(11%)	6	(6%)
Land Based Fishing	11	(9%)	7	(7%)
Powered Boat	11	(9%)	8	(8%)
Non Powered Boating	7	(6%)	8	(8%)
Other Recreation	6	(5%)	8	(8%)
Sailing	1	(1%)	1	(1%)
<i>Non Recreational Drownings</i>				
Immersion Incidents	23	(18%)	29	(28%)
Occupational Related	1	(1%)	0	(0%)
<i>Other Activity Drownings (Road Vehicle, Suicide, Homicide)</i>				
	33	(27%)	23	(22%)
Environment				
Beaches	29	(24%)	21	(20%)
Rivers	27	(22%)	32	(30%)
Offshore	21	(17%)	14	(13%)
Inland Still Waters	18	(15%)	11	(10%)
Tidal Waters	13	(11%)	14	(13%)
Domestic	6	(5%)	6	(6%)
Home Pools	6	(5%)	4	(4%)
Public Pools	3	(2%)	1	(1%)
Ethnicity				
Asian	18	(15%)	6	(6%)
Maori	24	(20%)	23	(22%)
NZ European	63	(51%)	57	(54%)
Pacific Peoples	9	(7%)	8	(8%)
Other Nationalities	6	(5%)	7	(7%)
Unknown	3	(2%)	4	(4%)
Gender				
Female	25	(20%)	25	(24%)
Male	98	(80%)	81	(77%)
Age Groups				
00-04	14	(11%)	8	(8%)
05-14	1	(1%)	3	(3%)
15-24	16	(13%)	17	(16%)
25-34	20	(16%)	13	(12%)
35-44	17	(14%)	16	(15%)
45-54	20	(16%)	19	(18%)
55-64	19	(15%)	12	(11%)
65+	16	(13%)	17	(16%)

Some percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

For DrownBase Fact Sheets and further information visit

www.watersafety.org.nz

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