

## Risk management solution for drowning and injury prevention

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#### Background/Introduction

SLSNZ has identified that two of four possible casual factors associated with drowning relate to people's ignorance, disregard or misunderstanding of the hazard and because they are uninformed or have unrestricted access to the hazard. These factors are integrated into SLSNZ National Lifesaving Plan. Unfortunately many people drown at beaches throughout the country at locations that have no lifeguarding patrols in place, thus they are faced with the risks of hazard misunderstanding and/or information/restriction.

#### Aims/Objectives

SLSNZ over the last two to three years has set out to develop an evidence based solution that implements a risk management model and information management system that addresses these casual hazards. This solution has the requirement that it must be able to be applied to any coastal location, regardless of any other environmental factor.

#### Target

The target for the solution is any person who visits/works/lives in the coastal environment regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. A supplementary target are those Governmental and non Governmental agencies that have responsibility for drowning hazard identification and management. In addition all tourism operators who promote access to safe coastal environments as part of their offer.

#### Methods

SLSNZ Coastal Public Safety solution now has been applied to over 120 coastal environments in New Zealand. The database integrated to this solution is now by far the most sophisticated source of intelligence relating to beaches on New Zealand. In doing so it captures in depth data relating to environment, hazards, human usage, swell and human activity profiles, facilities and infrastructure and emergency management. This location specific data when applied to water safety related standards and guidelines results in the automatic production of an accurate long term action plan for each location assessed that addresses the evidential risks and actions required mitigating these risks. As an expansion this solution is currently being trialled (with the cooperation with other community parties – Coastguard New Zealand and Accident Compensation Corporation of New Zealand) in the blue water environments of ocean bar crossings and small vessel/boat launch and retrieval. The solution will be migrated to a technology platform and infrastructure so that it is accessible to New Zealanders through the Internet, mobile and sms services providing 24/7 access to this information for all.

#### Results/Evaluation

The measurement of success and effectiveness of this solution will be a) reduction on coastal drowning rates (both fatal and non fatal), b) independent programme audit, c) quantity and consistency of control measure implementation across New Zealand.

#### Discussion

SLSNZ has a goal to complete the location specific assessments across in excess of 500 coastal locations in the country. The result will provide a greater reach of hazard risk assessment and reduction that that currently provided through its patrolling services. The solution has the ability to be applied to any location in any country that the casual factors, as outlined in the introduction to this abstract, are relevant.

#### Conclusion

With the support of key stakeholders and learning from the evidence we are confident that any longer term drowning prevention initiatives will be targeted and meaningful. The Coastal Public Safety solution is about making evidence based decisions to achieve a positive public safety outcome.

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