

Background

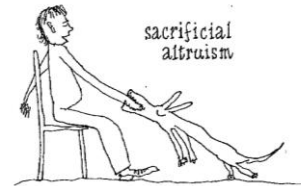
- There is no greater sacrifice than that made by a rescuer who throws it all on the line to rescue a drowning victim
 - Courage
 - Sacrifice
 - Selfless
 - Instinctive
 - Altruism

A Moral Hierarchy

- Duty – an obligation
- Supererogation – “doing more than is required by duty”
- Altruism – supererogation, but with risk

Altruism – is the renunciation of the self, and an exclusive concern for the welfare of others

Often rewarded



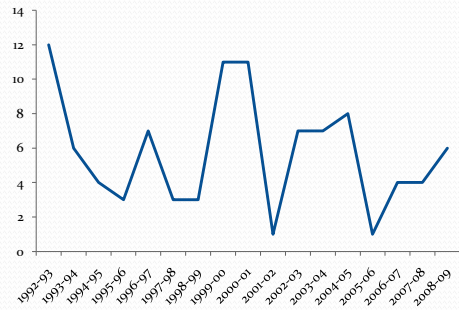
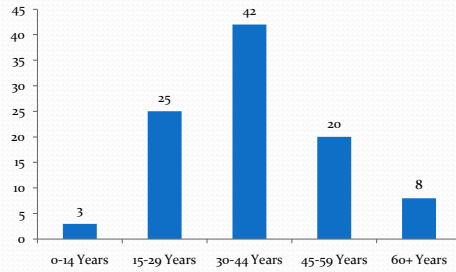
The **Victoria Cross (VC)** is the highest military decoration which is, or has been, awarded for valour "in the face of the enemy" to members of the armed forces of various Commonwealth countries, and previous British Empire territories.

Methods

- 15 Year (1992-2007) total population consecutive unselected series of drowning deaths
 - ABS – 1 July 1992 – 30 June 2002
 - NCIS – 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2007
 - National Drowning Report - RLSSA
- All drowning deaths involving an attempted rescue were selected

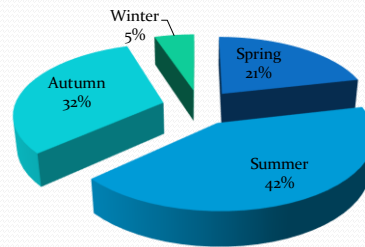
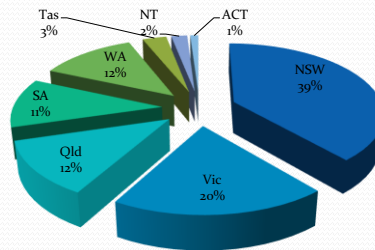
Results

- 103 Victims
 - average 6 per annum
- 69% Male
- Mean age 36.5 years
(range (8-71 years))
- Alcohol 10% of cases



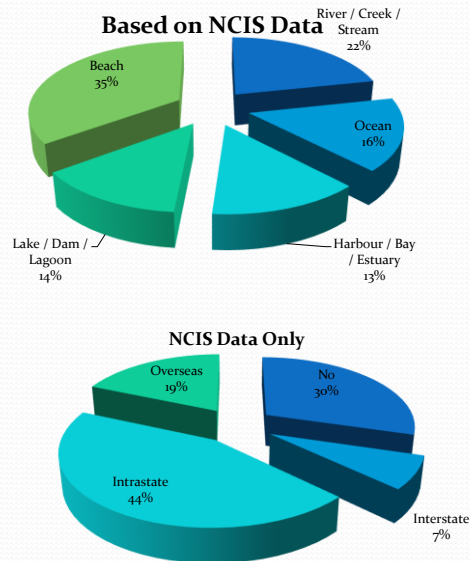
Results

- State / Territory of Incident
 - NSW 39%
 - Vic 20%
 - WA and Qld 12%
- Season
 - Summer (42%) most common season



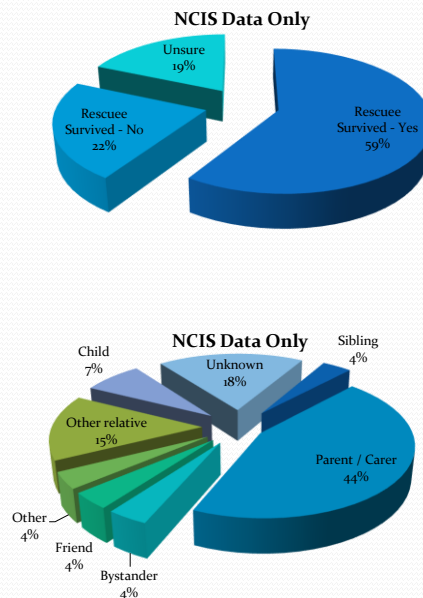
Results

- Most Common Locations
 - Beach (35%)
 - River (22%)
 - Ocean (16%)
- Visitors
 - 30% Not a visitor
 - 44% Intrastate
 - 19% International



Results

- Rescuer Survived
 - 59% Yes
- Who attempted the rescue
 - Parent / guardian 44%
 - Other relative 15%
- Child was a victim of the rescue attempt in 17 (63%) of cases)



Discussion

- An altruistic impulse
- Loss of life
- Supervision

- Skills and drills of life saving
 - Preparation
 - Rescue sequence
 - Rope throw

- Further research required



Rescue Altruism

- Strategic ethical background e.g. The Good Samaritan
- Subjective identity of the rescuer with the victim
- Perception of risk
- Courage, gallantry, valour

EVERYONE CAN BE A LIFESAVER



Royal Life Saving

ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA

Conclusion

- Prevention is better than rescue
- All people should be empowered with basic life saving skills of non-contact rescues

The Impulse to Rescue

John Pearn
Richard Franklin

Royal Life Saving Society - Australia