

# Evaluation of the SafeWaters Water Safety Initiative in NSW

NSW Water Safety Taskforce

**SafeWaters**

A NSW GOVERNMENT WATER SAFETY INITIATIVE

Prepared by:

**The Hunter Valley Research Foundation**

Report for NSW Water Safety Taskforce

May 2003

Further information about the NSW Water Safety Taskforce is available from:

Executive Officer  
NSW Water Safety Taskforce  
Locked Bag 1422  
Silverwater NSW 2128

Telephone: 61 2 9006 3700  
Email: [safewaters@dsr.nsw.gov.au](mailto:safewaters@dsr.nsw.gov.au)  
Website: [www.safewaters.nsw.gov.au](http://www.safewaters.nsw.gov.au)

# Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	4	
<hr/>		
2 METHODS		
2.1 Survey methods	5	
2.2 Explanatory notes	6	
<hr/>		
3 RESULTS		
<b>3.1 Unprompted recall of water safety messages</b>	8	
3.1.1 Water safety messages recalled in the past two weeks	8	
3.1.2 Recall of SafeWaters advertisement in the past two weeks	9	
3.1.3 Recall of additional water safety messages in the past four years	10	
3.1.4 Perceived change in community awareness	11	
<b>3.2 Prompted recall of water safety messages</b>	12	
<b>3.3 Drowning prevention</b>	13	
3.3.1 Perceived change in the number of drownings in NSW	13	
3.3.2 Prevention of drownings	14	
<b>3.4 Perception of risk</b>	15	
<b>3.5 Practising safe behaviours</b>	18	
<b>3.6 Use of aquatic facilities</b>	23	
3.6.1 Private swimming pools	23	
3.6.2 Use of beaches	24	
<b>3.7 Exposure to the 2001–2002 Safewaters campaign</b>	25	
<hr/>		
4 CONCLUSION	28	
<hr/>		
APPENDIX 1	Survey questionnaire	29
APPENDIX 2	Survey respondents	36
APPENDIX 3	Frequency tables	37

# Table of Contents

## List of Tables

Table 1: Water safety messages recalled in the past two weeks	8
Table 2: Recall of messages from the SafeWaters campaign in the past two weeks	9
Table 3: Additional water safety messages recalled in the past four years	10
Table 4: Perceived change in the level of community awareness of water safety in the past four years	11
Table 5: Recall of key water safety messages	12
Table 6: Perceived change in the number of drownings in the past four years	13
Table 7: Perceived proportion of drownings in the NSW that could be prevented	14
Table 8: Current efforts to prevent drownings or near drownings compared to four years ago	14
Table 9: Recommended strategies to reduce the number of people who drown in NSW	15
Table 10: December pre-campaign rating of risk factors which may increase the risk of drowning	16
Table 11: January post-campaign rating of risk factors that may increase the risk of drowning	16
Table 12: April post-campaign rating of risk factors that may increase the risk of drowning	17
Table 13: Agreement scores for the risk factors that may increase the risk of drowning	17
Table 14: Pre-campaign reporting of personal safety behaviours	19
Table 15: Post-campaign reporting of personal safety behaviours	20
Table 16: Post-campaign reporting of personal safety behaviours	21
Table 17: Average scores for personal safety behaviours	22
Table 18: Use of aquatic facilities	23
Table 19: Use and safety features of private swimming pools	24
Table 20: Use of beaches in summer	24
Table 21: Location of respondents during the television campaign period	25
Table 22: Profile of television stations watched during the television campaign period	26
Table 23: Profile of television stations watched during the television campaign period	27

# 1 Introduction

In December 2001 the NSW Water Safety Taskforce commissioned The Hunter Valley Research Foundation (HVRF) to undertake an evaluation of the SafeWaters public awareness campaign in 2001–2002. The principal focus of the evaluation was the televised campaign scheduled to be screened during peak viewing periods over the 2001–2002 summer holidays and during the 2002 Easter holidays. Similar campaigns were televised in 1998–1999 and 2000–2001.

The main objective of the research program was to provide the NSW Water Safety Taskforce with an indication of current perceptions of water safety issues and the impact of the televised campaign. More specifically, the program was designed to assess:

- perceptions of risk;
- attitudes to water safety;
- recall of the public awareness campaign;
- behavioural changes relating to the practices surrounding water safety in NSW.

A series of three population-based telephone surveys were planned to meet this objective. A baseline survey was conducted prior to the commencement of the televised announcements in December, with the second survey conducted immediately following completion of this stage in January 2002. The third survey was conducted in early to mid April 2002.

This final report presents the results from the three surveys conducted as part of the research program. A description of the survey methods is provided in section two. Section three contains a discussion of the main results and highlights any significant changes that occurred between the baseline survey and the post-campaign survey. Concluding remarks are provided in section four. A copy of the survey questionnaire is contained in Appendix 1, a profile of respondents is provided in Appendix 2, detailed frequency tables in Appendix 3. The open-ended responses for question 10 are available upon request from the Executive Officer.



# 2 Methods

## Survey methods

### 2.1 Survey methods

**Data collection instrument:**

A core survey questionnaire to be used in each stage of the research program was developed in consultation with representatives of the NSW Water Safety Taskforce. Following the initial survey, the questionnaire was reviewed with minor additions for the post-campaign surveys. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

**Data collection:**

Using the structured questionnaire, the survey was administered on the HVRF Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. The questionnaire was loaded into a computer program that guided each interviewer through the interview process. The CATI program stored the collected information in an ASCII text file, which was loaded into database and analytical programs. The CATI system had built-in quality control checks to ensure that the answers entered were not outside pre-programmed limits. The questionnaire was piloted before the commencement of each survey. If no changes were required to the questionnaire following the piloting process, the data collected was used in the survey.

In the pre-campaign survey 500 completed interviews were obtained, with 510 interviews completed in the first post-campaign survey and 500 in the second post-campaign survey.

A survey of 500 residents statewide will provide a statistical accuracy of 4.5% for a response of 50% at a confidence level of 95%. Practically, this means that if 50% of the 500 persons surveyed said that they had seen the advertisements that showed a fence around waterways, the true proportion of all persons in the NSW who would give the same answer (if all people were interviewed) would be between 45.5% and 54.5%, 95 times out of 100.

**Response rate:**

A response rate of 63% was obtained for the pre-campaign survey, 66% for the first post-campaign survey and 68% for the second post-campaign survey.

**Data handling and analysis:**

All data collection, coding and analysis was carried out by HVRF using dBase and SPSS/PC statistical analysis software. The survey data were weighted by household size and then by respondent age and sex based on the 1996 Australian Census of Population and Housing.

Pre-campaign survey	Televised campaign	Post-campaign survey	Televised campaign	Post-campaign survey
12 Dec 2001 to 20 Dec 2001	23 Dec 2001 to 12 Jan 2002	15 Jan 2002 to 24 Jan 2002	29 March 2002 to 1 April 2002	2 April 2002 to 22 April 2002

**Statistical significance:**

Statistical significance in this report is at the 95% level of confidence. A difference that is statistically significant is probably a true difference as the likelihood that the change is due to sampling error is less than 5%.

Data collection took place as follows:

**Sample selection:**

The sample was constructed in the same manner for each survey to enable comparison of the results over time. A two-stage random process was used to obtain a NSW-wide community sample. Contact telephone numbers were obtained by random selection from the electronic White Pages on compact disc system. Within the household, a further selection was made of persons over 15 years based upon the most recent birthday. A demographic profile of respondents is presented in Appendix 2.

Statistical testing was undertaken to determine if there were statistically significant differences between the pre-campaign and post-campaign findings. Pearson's Chi-squared, one-way ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis tests of significance were applied where appropriate to test for differences.

# 2 Methods

## Explanatory notes

### 2.2 Explanatory notes

In the report and tables that follow, a number of conventions have been established for the purpose of presenting the survey results. These are explained in the Scales and Reporting sections below.

#### Scales:

Respondents were presented with a five-point scale for the assessment of:

- agreement with a series of risk factors for drowning;
- frequency of personal safety behaviours.

The scales were constructed as follows:

Agreement	Frequency
1=strongly disagree	1=always
2=disagree	2=mostly
3=neither	3=sometimes
4=agree	4=rarely
5=strongly agree	5=never
<b>Non-response:</b> For respondents who could not provide a rating on this scale, <i>don't know</i> and <i>refused</i> options were available.	<b>Non-response:</b> For respondents who could not provide a rating on this scale, three non-response options were available: <i>not applicable/not appropriate</i> , <i>don't know</i> and <i>refused</i> .

#### Reporting:

Results from these scales are presented in two formats; breakdowns and scores.

#### Breakdowns:

The scales are grouped as follows and reported as the percentage of respondents falling into each category:

<b>Agreement</b>	Disagree	Strongly agree or disagree (a score of 1 or 2)
	Neutral	Neither (a score of 3)
	Agree	Agree or strongly agree (a score of 4 or 5)
	No response	Non-response as detailed above
<b>Frequency</b>	Mostly	Always or mostly (a score of 1 or 2)
	Sometimes	Sometimes (a score of 3)
	Rarely	Rarely or never (a score of 4 or 5)
	No response	Non-response as detailed above

## 2 Methods

### Scores:

The numeric values from the scales (1 to 5) were converted to an overall average (mean) score for all responses to each of the questions. This score is calculated only for those respondents who answered using the standard response scale – it does not include those who answered *don't know*, *not applicable* or *refused*. Results add up to 100% where relevant results are presented in tabular form. Some slight variations occur due to rounding.

An example of the calculation of an Agreement score follows. The Frequency scores use the same method.

Response scale	No. of responses	Response scale x number of responses	Score
1=strongly disagree	70	1 x 70	The score is calculated by dividing 1390 by the number of responses used (in this case 460 not 500): 1390/460 Score =3.0
2=disagree	100	2 x 100	
3=neither	80	3 x 80	
4=agree	170	4 x 170	
5=strongly agree	40	5 x 40	
Don't know	40	Not included in calculation	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1390</b>	

To obtain a score of 5.0, ALL respondents who gave the item a rating would have had to answer *strongly agree* or *never* as applicable.

### Interpretation:

In interpreting the Agreement scores, it should be remembered that:

- the higher the score, the greater the agreement
- an agreement score greater than 3.0 indicates that, on balance, respondents agreed with the statement.

Statement	Score	Agreement rating			
		Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Don't know %
Statement A	3.0	22.7	22.1	22.3	33.0
Statement B	3.0	44.5	4.3	41.2	10.0

Interpretation of the Frequency scores requires some care as three items are potentially negative behaviours. In general,

- the higher the score, the less likely a respondent is to undertake this behaviour
- a score greater than 3.0 indicates that, on balance, respondents are less likely to behave in this manner.

When interpreting the results, the breakdown and the score need to be considered together, not individually. The following table illustrates this by giving an example of two contrasting breakdowns that result in the same agreement score.

For Statement A there is a relatively even spread across the response categories, resulting in a score of 3.0. However, although the statement scores are equal, there is a strong polarisation of views in the responses for Statement B with almost half the population in disagreement with the statement. The interpretation for each of these statements is very different, despite the fact that they received the same agreement score.

# 3 Results

## Unprompted recall of safety messages

### 3.1 Unprompted recall of water safety messages

To assess recall of the televised SafeWaters campaign, respondents were asked about water safety messages they may have seen in the past two weeks or in the past four years. A series of three open-ended questions were used with minimal prompting and responses were coded into common themes during analysis.

#### 3.1.1 Water safety messages recalled in the past two weeks

Respondents were asked to remember one message about water safety that they could recall seeing in the past two weeks. This initial response was unprompted. The messages reported by respondents are provided in Table 1 and an analysis of these reveals the following:

- A third of respondents in the baseline survey recalled a recent water safety message prior to the screening of the televised SafeWaters campaign. The “do the five” advertisements featuring Laurie Lawrence were the most cited message;
- A statistically significant increase in the number of respondents who recalled a recent water safety message was found between the baseline survey in December 2001 (33.0%) and the first post-campaign survey conducted in January 2002 (56.4%);
- The proportion of respondents who recalled a recent water safety message in the second post-campaign survey in April 2002 (34.6%) was similar to that recorded in the baseline survey (33.0%);
- Some of the most commonly recalled messages across the three surveys were:
  - Laurie Lawrence/do the five
  - teach children to swim
  - a fence around waterways
  - swim between the flags
  - fence swimming pools/close gates.

**Table 1** Water safety messages recalled in the past two weeks

Heard or seen any messages in the past two weeks about water safety?	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Yes	33.0	56.4	34.6
No	66.4	43.0	62.4
Don't know	0.6	0.6	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Messages recalled (as a percentage of the total sample)	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Laurie Lawrence/do the five	4.6	5.2	6.1
Teach children to swim	3.2	4.0	4.1
Fence around waterways	0.4	5.4	3.2
Swim between the flags	2.8	8.2	2.6
Pollution in waterways or water preservation	1.2	1.4	2.6
Fence swimming pools/close gates	3.0	2.2	2.0
General learn to swim/swim and survive	1.0	2.2	1.6
General child safety and supervision around water	2.0	5.2	1.1
Safe boating	2.8	1.2	1.0
General water safety	2.2	3.2	0.9
Don't swim alone	0.2	2.0	0.9
Swimsafe	0.6	0.4	0.6
Conditions in the surf	0.2	0.8	0.4
Safety around pools	2.0	0.2	0.4
Don't mix alcohol and swimming	0.4	1.0	0.1
Checking water depth and for hazards	0.8	3.2	
Lifesaving	0.6	0.8	
Don't teach young children to swim		0.8	
Safety signs at pools or beach		0.8	
Image of child or person drowning		0.4	
Other	0.6	1.0	1.4
Don't remember/can't recall	4.4	6.8	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>56.4</b>	<b>34.1</b>

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells indicate that no responses were received for an item in that survey

# 3 Results

## Unprompted recall of safety messages

### 3.1.2 Recall of SafeWaters advertisement in the past two weeks

Respondents were asked if they recalled seeing in the past two weeks a television advertisement that showed a fence around waterways. Respondents were then asked to name the messages that they remembered from the advertisements. Table 2 contains the results from this question and reveals the following:

- Prior to the December 2001 screening of the televised SafeWaters campaign, 18% of respondents indicated that they recalled the image of a fence around waterways;
- Both post-campaign surveys highlighted a statistically significant increase when compared to the baseline survey in the number of respondents who recalled the advertisements. Almost six in ten respondents in the January survey, and four in ten in the April survey stated that they had seen the advertisements in the past two weeks;
- The need to swim between the flags was the main message remembered with 23% of respondents identifying it in the January 2002 survey and 21% identifying it in the April 2002 survey;
- Other key messages from the SafeWaters campaign were recalled by respondents including:
  - never swim alone
  - always supervise children near water
  - learn to swim and survive
  - fence swimming pools
  - check water depth and/or hazards.

**Table 2** Recall of messages from the SafeWaters campaign in the past two weeks

Seen a TV ad in the past two weeks that shows a fence around waterways	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Yes	18.0	59.2	40.4
No	79.8	39.4	55.7
Don't know	2.2	1.4	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Messages recalled (as a percentage of the total sample)	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Only swim between the red and yellow flags at the beach	3.3	23.4	20.7
Never swim alone	1.9	13.4	18.4
Learn to swim and survive	2.1	10.4	17.7
General water safety	0.9	6.1	11.4
Fence around waterways	1.4	4.0	9.6
Always supervise children near water	1.3	11.6	9.0
Fence swimming pools	2.5	10.4	9.0
Checking water depth and/or hazards	1.0	9.0	9.0
Pollution in waterways or water preservation	1.0	1.4	4.4
Safety around beaches		1.4	2.5
General child water safety	0.6	1.6	2.2
Safe boating	0.6	0.1	
Image of child or person drowning	0.6		
Other	1.1	2.8	3.9
Don't remember/can't recall	5.3	7.5	23.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>40.4</b>

**Explanatory notes:** 1. The sum of the percentages in each column for the messages recalled exceeds the total percentage as respondents were permitted to give more than one answer.  
2. Blank cells in the table indicate that no responses were received for an item in that survey.

# 3 Results

## Unprompted recall of safety messages

### 3.1.3 Recall of additional water safety messages in the past four years

Respondents were asked to identify any further water safety messages that they may have seen or heard over the past four years. Additional messages recalled by respondents appear in Table three.

- In each of the surveys approximately six in ten respondents recalled water safety messages over the past four years other than those they had previously mentioned;
- Swimming between the flags as well as fencing swimming pools and keeping gates closed were common themes cited by respondents in each of the surveys.



**Table 3** Additional water safety messages recalled in the past four years

Heard or seen any (other) message in the past 4 years about water safety	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Yes	69.0	61.8	58.7
No	28.2	36.2	38.5
Don't know	2.8	2.0	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Messages recalled (as a percentage of the total sample)	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Fence swimming pools/close gates	11.4	6.8	7.3
Swim between the flags	9.2	8.8	7.0
Laurie Lawrence/do the five	2.8	3.4	5.5
Teach children to swim	4.0	4.6	4.3
Pollution in waterways or water preservation	3.4	2.4	4.3
Fence around waterways	4.8	1.0	4.0
Safe boating	5.8	6.2	3.4
Checking water depth and/or hazards	4.4	3.4	2.9
General water safety	3.8	1.6	2.8
General child safety and supervision around water	2.0	5.6	2.6
General learn to swim/swim and survive	2.2	0.8	2.6
Safety around pools	3.4	1.0	1.3
Lifesaving	0.6	1.0	0.8
Don't swim alone	1.0	1.8	0.7
Learn resuscitation/CPR		0.6	0.4
Don't mix alcohol and swimming	0.2	1.6	0.3
Conditions in the surf	0.2	0.4	0.4
Safety signs at pools or beaches		0.6	0.3
Don't teach young children to swim		0.6	0.2
Swimsafe	0.4	0.6	
Image of child or person drowning	1.8	0.6	
Other	1.2	1.8	0.7
Don't remember/can't recall	6.4	6.8	6.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>61.8</b>	<b>58.6</b>

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no responses were received for an item in that survey

# 3 Results

## Unprompted recall of safety messages

### 3.1.4 Perceived change in community awareness

To assess general perceptions, respondents were asked if the level of water safety awareness had changed in the community over the past four years.

As shown in Table four the responses to this question were similar before and after the televised campaigns. Almost 60% of the respondents in all three surveys believe there has been an increase in the level of awareness while almost a third of respondents believe awareness hasn't changed much.

**Table 4** Perceived change in the level of community awareness of water safety in the past four years

Change in community awareness	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Increased	58.8	59.6	58.4
Hasn't changed much	32.0	30.2	30.2
Decreased	2.8	3.6	2.2
Unsure/refused	6.4	6.6	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>



# 3 Results

## Prompted recall of safety messages

### 3.2 Prompted recall of water safety messages

A more structured approach in comparison to the previous open-ended questions was used to assess further the recall of respondents. Towards the end of the survey, respondents were prompted to recall key messages from the SafeWaters campaign.

Table five indicates the percentage of respondents who stated that they recalled each of the messages. Full frequency tables for the responses to this question from each of the surveys are contained in Appendix 3. Key findings from these results include:

- Relative to the baseline survey there was a statistically significant increase in the recall of seven out of eight of the key messages in the January survey. Significantly more respondents recalled having seen a message in the two weeks prior to the January survey about:
  - only swimming between the red and yellow flags at the beach
  - always supervising children near water
  - reading and obeying signs around waterways
  - making sure swimming pools have safety fences
  - being aware of changing conditions in the water
  - never swimming alone
  - being aware of fast flowing water, submerged objects and deep water.
- Relative to the baseline survey there was a statistically significant increase in the recall of only two out of eight of the key messages in the April survey. Significantly more respondents recalled having seen a message in the two weeks prior to the April survey about:
  - never swimming alone
  - being aware of fast flowing water, submerged objects and deep water.
- Prior to the televised SafeWaters campaign, more than half of the respondents recalled seeing messages about swimming between the flags and learning to swim and survive;
- While the proportion of respondents who had seen a message about learning to swim and survive stayed relatively consistent over the three surveys, a large increase in the recall of messages about swimming between the flags was recorded between the baseline survey and the first post-campaign survey in January (from 52.0% to 74.6%). However, in the second post-campaign survey in April, the recall of this message dropped back to pre-campaign levels. The same pattern was apparent for messages about supervising children near water.

**Table 5** Recall of key water safety messages

Recall seeing a message in the past two weeks about ...	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Learning to swim and survive	52.2	57.3	52.6
Only swimming between the red and yellow flags at the beach	52.0	74.6	52.3
Always supervising children near water	47.2	61.4	47.5
Making sure swimming pools have safety fences	38.5	48.6	43.1
Reading and obeying signs around waterways	32.0	52.6	38.6
Never swimming alone	24.6	43.2	33.8
Being aware of changing conditions in the water	25.6	45.3	31.4
Being aware of fast flowing water, submerged objects and deep water	<b>19.8</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>30.2</b>

**Explanatory notes:** 1. The percentages represent the number of respondents who answered "yes" to seeing each of the messages in the past two weeks.  
 2. Shaded cells indicate statistically significant differences between the December 2001 and the January 2002 results at the 95% level of significance.  
 3. Bolded cells indicate statistically significant differences between the December 2001 and the April 2002 results at the 95% level of significance.

# 3 Results

## Drowning prevention

### 3.3 Drowning prevention

To obtain an indication of community perception of the incidence and prevention of drownings in NSW respondents were asked a series of short questions. In the post-campaign survey respondents were also asked about ways in which the number of drownings may be reduced.

#### 3.3.1 Perceived change in the number of drownings in NSW

Respondents were asked to state if they believed the number of drownings that occur in NSW had changed over the past four years.

The community appears to be divided on this issue with no clear view being expressed.

The results in Table six show the respondents were reasonably well divided between an increase, a decrease or no change in the number of drownings. A noticeable number of respondents were also unsure about any change. These findings were consistent both before and after the screening of the SafeWaters campaign in the 2001–2002 summer holidays and after the screening of the campaign in the 2002 Easter holidays.

The proportion of respondents that were unsure of whether a change in the number of drownings had occurred or not gradually increased from the December 2001 survey (16.2%) to the January survey (20.4%), and again to the April 2002 survey (28.2%).

**Table 6** Perceived change in the number of drownings in the past four years

Change in the number of drownings	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Increased	24.0	20.6	24.3
Hasn't changed much	31.9	33.0	30.6
Decreased	27.9	26.0	16.8
Unsure/refused	16.2	20.4	28.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>



# 3 Results

## Drowning prevention

### 3.3.2 Prevention of drownings

To gauge the community's perception of attempts to prevent drownings in NSW, respondents were asked to identify the proportion of drownings that they think could be prevented and any change in the effort to reduce potential cases.

The results in Tables seven and eight indicate the following:

- The perceptions held by respondents in relation to drowning prevention did not differ markedly between December 2001, January 2002 and April 2002;
- Approximately eight in ten respondents perceived that between 50 and 100% of all drownings could be prevented. The mean score for the frequencies in Table seven indicate that on average, the community believe more than half of the drownings in NSW could be prevented;
- Over three-quarters of the respondents believe more is being done to prevent drownings or near drownings compared to four years ago. This result remained relatively consistent over the three surveys.

**Table 7** Perceived proportion of drownings in NSW that could be prevented

Proportion of drowning that could be prevented	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Nearly all of them	33.0	27.3	28.2
More than half	25.2	30.9	27.6
About half	27.2	24.8	25.5
Less than half	7.2	9.8	8.6
Hardly any	2.4	1.8	3.4
Unsure/refused	5.0	5.4	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 8** Current efforts to prevent drownings or near drownings compared to four years ago

Current efforts to prevent drownings	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
More being done	75.8	79.0	77.3
Hasn't been much change	10.2	12.4	9.5
Less being done	6.6	3.6	4.8
Unsure/refused	7.4	5.0	8.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents in both post-campaign surveys were asked to nominate the most effective way of reducing the number of drownings that occur in NSW. This was an unprompted, open-ended question and responses were coded into common themes during analysis. A copy of the responses to the open-ended questions are available by request from the Executive Officer of the NSW Water Safety Taskforce.

The results from this question are summarised in Table 9. Key observations from this information are as follows:

- Continuing education and awareness programs were the major focus in an effort to reduce the number of drownings. More than one in five respondents recommended further water safety education aimed at either children or the wider community in the January survey, which increased to almost one in three respondents in the April survey;
- The need for further education and awareness was highlighted by an additional group of respondents who believed water safety messages should be advertised more;
- Ensuring both children and adults learn to swim was also seen as an effective way of reducing the number of people who drown in NSW;
- Supervision of children around water and pool safety/better and enforced fencing of swimming pools were another two strategies suggested by respondents in the post-campaign surveys.

# 3 Results

## Perception of risk

**Table 9** Recommended strategies to reduce the number of people who drown in NSW

Ways to reduce drownings	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Water safety education and awareness—general	16.8	25.2
Learn to swim—children	9.9	10.9
More advertising	12.9	8.9
Learn to swim—general	12.6	8.6
Supervision of children around water	8.5	7.2
Water safety education—children	6.5	7.0
Pool safety/better and enforced fencing of swimming pools	3.6	6.9
Greater personal responsibility	1.9	4.9
More information for tourists and non-English language signs	4.3	4.1
More beach patrols	2.8	2.5
Better public safety signs	2.6	1.8
Fines for not obeying signs or lifesavers	2.0	1.3
Don't go near water/ban swimming	1.1	1.2
Swim between the flags and listen to lifesavers	1.5	1.0
Improve boat safety	0.7	0.3
Don't mix alcohol and swimming	1.1	0.2
More people to do first aid and CPR courses	1.4	0.1
Don't swim alone	0.7	
Ban fishing on rock platforms	0.6	
Safety at rivers and dams	0.4	0.2
Other	0.7	2.2
Don't know/not sure	7.4	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3.4 Perception of risk

To assess the perception of risk in relation to water safety within the general community, respondents were asked to rate a series of ten potential risk factors. In each case respondents were asked to indicate if they agreed or disagreed that the risk factor may increase the chances of drowning.

Frequencies and agreement scores recorded by respondents are summarised for each of the surveys in Tables 10, 11 and 12. The scores were converted from frequencies on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale. Full frequency tables from each of the surveys are contained in Appendix 3.

An analysis of the results provided in Tables 10, 11 and 12 indicates:

- Respondents to each of the three surveys agreed that all of the ten risk factors might increase the chances of drowning;
- Two risk factors were consistently rated relatively higher on the agreement scale indicating that the respondents felt more strongly about the possible association between these occurrences and the risk of drowning. These items were:
  - consuming alcohol before swimming
  - diving into water without checking the depth first.
- The risk factor that was rated as a lesser concern in comparison to the other items was being a tourist visiting a new area. More than 15% of respondents from each of the three surveys either disagreed or were neutral about the increased risk associated with being a first time visitor to a new location. A similar level of reduced concern was indicated by respondents in the post-campaign surveys in regard to swimming alone in the surf, lake or river.

# 3 Results

## Perception of risk

**Table 10** December pre-campaign rating of risk factors which may increase the risk of drowning

Risk Factors December 2001 ratings	Score	Agreement Ratings			
		Agree %	Neither %	Disagree %	No response %
Consuming alcohol before swimming	4.6	95.5	2.7	1.7	0.2
Diving into water without checking the depth first	4.6	96.2	2.5	1.3	
Poor swimming ability	4.5	94.9	3.4	1.6	0.1
Being a child under five years	4.4	90.1	5.5	3.9	0.4
Being caught in a rip in the surf	4.4	92.1	4.6	2.8	0.5
Swimming alone in the surf, lake or river	4.4	90.0	7.0	3.0	
Not swimming between the red and yellow flags	4.4	93.3	4.1	2.2	0.4
Unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person	4.3	89.9	6.6	3.3	0.2
Being unfamiliar with the water location	4.3	89.1	8.0	2.4	0.4
Being a tourist visiting a new area	4.1	82.9	10.6	6.1	0.3

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of agreement on a 5 point scale where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the greater the level of agreement by the respondents with the statement.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.
3. Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

**Table 11** January post-campaign rating of risk factors that may increase the risk of drowning

Risk Factors January 2002 ratings	Score	Agreement Ratings			
		Agree %	Neither %	Disagree %	No response %
Consuming alcohol before swimming	4.7	97.1	1.8	1.1	0.1
Diving into water without checking the depth first	4.6	95.8	3.1	1.1	0.1
Poor swimming ability	4.5	93.9	3.9	2.1	
Being caught in a rip in the surf	4.4	91.4	5.7	2.8	0.1
Being a child under five years	4.4	88.5	6.7	4.4	0.4
Not swimming between the red and yellow flags	4.4	89.9	7.9	2.0	0.2
Being unfamiliar with the water location	4.3	90.6	4.6	4.7	0.1
Unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person	4.3	87.4	7.3	4.1	1.2
Swimming alone in the surf, lake or river	4.3	84.3	10.1	5.6	0.1
Being a tourist visiting a new area	4.2	83.7	7.3	8.5	0.4

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of agreement on a 5 point scale where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the greater the level of agreement by the respondents with the statement.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.
3. Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

# 3 Results

## Perception of risk

**Table 12** April post-campaign rating of risk factors that may increase the risk of drowning

Risk Factors April 2002 ratings	Score	Agreement Ratings			
		Agree %	Neither %	Disagree %	No response %
Consuming alcohol before swimming	4.6	93.0	3.4	3.0	0.7
Diving into water without checking the depth first	4.6	92.9	3.4	2.9	0.6
Poor swimming ability	4.5	93.0	3.3	3.4	0.3
Being caught in a rip in the surf	4.5	87.9	8.9	1.5	1.7
Being a child under five years	4.4	87.6	7.1	4.9	0.5
Not swimming between the red and yellow flags	4.4	87.6	8.2	3.8	0.4
Being unfamiliar with the water location	4.3	88.1	6.8	4.3	0.7
Unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person	4.3	85.8	7.6	6.5	0.2
Swimming alone in the surf, lake or river	4.3	86.4	9.1	4.6	
Being a tourist visiting a new area	4.2	81.0	12.2	6.8	

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of agreement on a 5 point scale where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the greater the level of agreement by the respondents with the statement.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.
3. Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

A comparison of the agreement scores obtained in the pre and post-campaign surveys is provided in Table 13. The key finding from this comparison was that the average agreement scores for the risk factors appear to have remained relatively consistent over the three surveys.

**Table 13** Agreement scores for risk factors that may increase the risk of drowning

Risk factors	December 2001	January 2002	April 2002
Consuming alcohol before swimming	4.6	4.7	4.6
Diving into water without checking the depth first	4.6	4.6	4.6
Poor swimming ability	4.5	4.5	4.5
Being caught in a rip in the surf	4.4	4.4	4.5
Being a child under five years	4.4	4.4	4.4
Not swimming between the red and yellow flags	4.4	4.4	4.4
Swimming alone in the surf, lake or river	4.4	4.3	4.3
Unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person	4.3	4.3	4.3
Being unfamiliar with the water location	4.3	4.3	4.3
Being a tourist visiting a new area	4.1	4.2	4.2

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of agreement on a 5 point scale where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the greater the level of agreement by the respondents with the statement.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.

# 3 Results

## Practising safe behaviours

### 3.5 Practising safe behaviours

To assess general attitudes towards water safety and other personal safety issues, respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they practice a series of 22 behaviours.

Frequencies and agreement scores recorded by respondents are summarised for each of the surveys in Tables 14, 15 and 16. The scores were converted from frequencies on a 1 (always) to 5 (never) scale. Care should be taken when interpreting the scores. Most of the items were positive behaviours however three of the items asked about behaviours that are often seen to be negative. Full frequency tables from each of the surveys are contained in Appendix 3.

An examination of the information provided in Tables 14, 15 and 16 suggests:

- Scores for the positive behaviours fell in a range between 1.1 and 3.1. This indicates that on average, respondents practiced these behaviours between *always* and *some of the time*;
- The two behaviours which received scores closest to the top of the scale and were done almost always by all respondents were:
  - check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street
  - ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water.
- Scores for the three negative behaviours fell in a range between 3.7 and 4.8. This indicates that on average, respondents practiced these more risky behaviours between *rarely* and *never*;
- There were however a small group of respondents in each survey that indicated they did undertake these potentially negative behaviours on a frequent basis. In particular, drink and drive, and swimming alone. The later result reflects the relatively lower level of concern associated with swimming alone as a risk factor that may increase the chances of drowning.

- No response was given by over 20% of the respondents to several of the behaviours. In general, the respondents believed that these behaviours were not applicable to them, such as:
  - ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat
  - avoid travelling on public transport alone at night
  - check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in.



# 3 Results

## Practising safe behaviours

**Table 14** Pre-campaign reporting of personal safety behaviours

Personal behaviours December 2001 ratings	Score	Frequency of Behaviour			
		Always or mostly %	Sometimes %	Never or rarely %	No response %
Drink and drive	4.7	3.8	3.3	85.0	7.9
Swim alone in the surf, lake or river	4.4	7.1	10.4	72.4	10.0
Walk alone after dark	3.7	18.5	20.0	60.9	0.5
Wear shoes when walking on the beach	3.0	37.2	21.0	36.5	5.5
Wear sunscreen when outdoors	2.4	56.2	21.4	21.8	0.6
Avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm	2.3	63.0	13.0	23.9	0.2
Check who is around before drawing money from an ATM	2.1	58.6	11.1	16.4	14.0
Swim at patrolled beaches	2.0	60.1	13.9	10.3	15.7
Avoid travelling on public transport alone at night	2.0	56.2	8.0	14.7	21.1
Check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach	1.7	71.2	9.9	7.8	11.1
Avoid swimming near board riders	1.7	70.9	6.6	6.6	15.9
Avoid being in dangerous areas alone	1.6	83.9	8.6	6.5	1.0
Check the depth of water before jumping or diving in	1.6	72.6	6.7	6.4	14.3
Check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in	1.6	63.6	7.9	6.0	22.5
Keep a good eye out when others are in the water	1.6	79.8	13.1	3.7	3.5
Take regular breaks when driving long distances	1.6	72.0	9.7	3.6	14.8
Check the temperature of the bath water before getting in	1.5	78.6	4.8	8.0	8.6
Ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat	1.5	64.3	7.4	4.8	23.5
Swim between the flags when at the beach	1.4	76.6	5.6	3.4	14.4
Lock your car up	1.3	83.6	5.4	2.9	8.2
Ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water	1.2	89.3	2.8	2.4	5.5
Check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street	1.1	96.5	2.2	1.1	0.3

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of frequency on a 5 point scale where 1 represents always and 5 is never. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the less likely a respondent is to undertake this behaviour.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.

# 3 Results

## Practising safe behaviours

**Table 15** Post-campaign reporting of personal safety behaviours

Personal behaviours January 2002 ratings	Score	Frequency of Behaviour			
		Always or mostly %	Sometimes %	Never or rarely %	No response %
Drink and drive	4.7	3.1	3.7	88.1	5.0
Swim alone in the surf, lake or river	4.2	9.6	11.2	66.2	12.8
Walk alone after dark	3.8	17.3	22.6	59.5	0.6
Wear shoes when walking on the beach	3.0	37.2	17.8	38.7	6.3
Wear sunscreen when outdoors	2.3	60.7	17.4	21.6	0.3
Avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm	2.3	60.6	16.7	21.8	0.9
Check who is around before drawing money from an ATM	2.1	58.7	13.8	14.9	12.7
Avoid travelling on public transport alone at night	2.0	57.1	11.6	13.9	17.3
Swim at patrolled beaches	1.8	63.0	11.6	7.6	17.8
Avoid swimming near board riders	1.7	66.3	7.3	8.3	18.0
Swim between the flags when at the beach	1.6	70.0	9.3	4.3	16.5
Check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach	1.6	71.4	9.2	5.6	13.8
Check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in	1.6	62.9	3.8	8.0	25.4
Keep a good eye out when others are in the water	1.6	78.5	12.7	4.3	4.3
Take regular breaks when driving long distances	1.6	74.5	7.6	6.7	11.2
Avoid being in dangerous areas alone	1.5	83.8	8.9	6.9	0.5
Check the depth of water before jumping or diving in	1.4	76.5	4.0	3.5	16.0
Check the temperature of the bath water before getting in	1.4	77.9	5.1	6.8	10.1
Ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat	1.4	64.3	4.9	5.5	25.3
Lock your car up	1.3	86.7	4.6	2.8	5.9
Check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street	1.1	98.1	1.1	0.8	0.1
Ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water	1.1	89.3	0.7	1.3	8.7

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of frequency on a 5 point scale where 1 represents always and 5 is never. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the less likely a respondent is to undertake this behaviour.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.

# 3 Results

## Practising safe behaviours

**Table 16** Post-campaign reporting of personal safety behaviours

Personal behaviours April 2002 ratings	Score	Frequency of Behaviour			
		Always or mostly %	Sometimes %	Never or rarely %	No response %
Drink and drive	4.8	0.7	3.3	83.7	12.4
Swim alone in the surf, lake or river	4.4	5.9	9.9	70.8	13.4
Walk alone after dark	3.7	21.6	20.0	58.2	0.1
Wear shoes when walking on the beach	3.1	33.7	17.1	40.6	8.6
Wear sunscreen when outdoors	2.5	57.4	16.4	25.9	0.3
Avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm	2.5	58.1	15.6	26.3	0.0
Avoid travelling on public transport alone at night	2.4	49.4	7.7	21.9	21.0
Check who is around before drawing money from an ATM	2.0	59.5	12.1	13.5	15.0
Swim at patrolled beaches	1.9	60.7	10.8	10.9	17.6
Avoid swimming near board riders	1.7	65.6	6.4	7.4	20.5
Take regular breaks when driving long distances	1.7	68.9	10.3	5.8	15.0
Swim between the flags when at the beach	1.6	68.9	6.7	6.6	17.8
Check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach	1.6	65.0	9.9	5.7	19.4
Check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in	1.6	53.6	7.9	4.7	33.8
Keep a good eye out when others are in the water	1.6	75.0	12.2	5.1	7.8
Avoid being in dangerous areas alone	1.6	83.3	8.6	6.7	1.6
Ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat	1.5	61.5	5.6	4.7	28.1
Lock your car up	1.4	82.7	4.6	4.4	8.2
Check the depth of water before jumping or diving in	1.4	68.8	6.5	4.2	20.4
Check the temperature of the bath water before getting in	1.3	80.9	4.3	4.6	10.3
Check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street	1.2	95.0	3.4	1.2	0.4
Ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water	1.1	85.1	1.4	0.0	13.6

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of frequency on a 5 point scale where 1 represents always and 5 is never. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the less likely a respondent is to undertake this behaviour.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.

# 3 Results

## Practising safe behaviours

A comparison of the scores obtained in the pre and post-campaign surveys is provided in Table 17. The pattern of personal behaviour based on the average scores remained relatively similar during the pre and post-campaign surveys.

**Table 17** Average scores for personal safety behaviours

Personal behaviours	December 2001	January 2002	April 2002
<b>Positive behaviours</b>			
Wear shoes when walking on the beach	3.0	3.0	3.1
Avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm	2.3	2.3	2.5
Wear sunscreen when outdoors	2.4	2.3	2.5
Avoid travelling on public transport alone at night	2.0	2.0	2.4
Check who is around before drawing money from an ATM	2.1	2.1	2.0
Swim at patrolled beaches	2.0	1.8	1.9
Avoid swimming near board riders	1.7	1.7	1.7
Take regular breaks when driving long distances	1.6	1.6	1.7
Check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in	1.6	1.6	1.6
Check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach	1.7	1.6	1.6
Swim between the flags when at the beach	1.4	1.6	1.6
Keep a good eye out when others are in the water	1.6	1.6	1.6
Avoid being in dangerous areas alone	1.6	1.5	1.6
Ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat	1.5	1.4	1.5
Check the depth of water before jumping or diving in	1.6	1.4	1.4
Lock your car up	1.3	1.3	1.4
Check the temperature of the bath water before getting in	1.5	1.4	1.3
Check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street	1.1	1.1	1.2
Ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water	1.2	1.1	1.1
<b>Negative behaviours</b>			
Walk alone after dark	3.7	3.8	3.7
Swim alone in the surf, lake or river	4.4	4.2	4.4
Drink and drive	4.7	4.7	4.8

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The scores represent the mean or average level of frequency on a 5 point scale where 1 represents always and 5 is never. Therefore, the closer the score is to 5, the less likely a respondent is to undertake this behaviour.
2. Non-responses are not included in the calculation of scores.

# 3 Results

## Use of aquatic facilities

### 3.6 Use of aquatic facilities

In order to develop a profile of aquatic facility usage, respondents were asked about their use of private pools and waterways, particularly beaches.

Initially respondents were asked if they had been in or on the water at a pool, beach, lake, river or dam in the past two weeks. The results to this question are contained in Table 18 and indicate the following:

- Approximately half of the respondents (49.4%) had used an aquatic facility in early December 2001;
- A statistically significant increase in the number of people using pools or waterways was detected in the January post-campaign survey with 64.2% of respondents reporting some usage;
- Slightly less than half of the respondents (45.2%) to the April post-campaign survey had used an aquatic facility in the two weeks prior to completing the survey.

**Table 18** Use of aquatic facilities

Been in or on the water at a pool, beach, lake, river or dam in the past two weeks	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Yes	49.4	64.2	45.2
No	50.6	35.8	54.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 3.6.1 Private swimming pools

Respondents were asked about private swimming pools at their home.

The results in Table 19 indicate that less than a quarter of respondents have swimming pools. The proportion of respondents with pools identified in the January post-campaign survey was just under 18%, and for the April post-campaign survey was slightly less than 20%. Those respondents with pools were then asked about safety features and usage.

Key findings from Table 19 include:

- Over 80% of the pool owners reported that the pool was fenced from the house and included self-closing gates.
- While the proportions for these two safety features were the same in the December survey, it is interesting to note the differences in the January survey. Further investigation of this difference revealed that in both surveys several pool owners indicated that while the pool was not fenced from the house, self-closing gates had been installed. In the April post-campaign survey more than 90% of respondents that had a private pool had their pool fenced from the house and had a self-closing gate installed.
- Almost nine out of ten respondents who had a pool at their home indicated that they would use the pool at least once a week during summer. The proportion of respondents who indicated everyday usage during summer increased noticeably from 28.4% in the December survey to 43.8% in the January survey, and then decreased to 27.6% in the April survey.
- Respondents who used their pool less than three days a week were slightly more likely to report usage on weekend days rather than weekdays.



# 3 Results

## Use of aquatic facilities

**Table 19** Use and safety features of private swimming pools

Private swimming pools	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Have a swimming pool at home	23.4	17.8	19.7
<b>Pool safety features (as a percentage of respondents who have a swimming pool)</b>			
Pool fenced from house	87.2	80.9	91.8
Self-closing gates installed	87.2	85.2	93.6
<b>Use of private pool during summer (as a percentage of respondents who have a swimming pool)</b>			
Every day	28.4	43.8	27.6
3–6 days a week	28.4	21.3	31.9
1–2 days a week	30.2	23.6	27.6
1–2 times a month	6.9	5.6	5.8
1–2 times during the summer	2.6	3.4	2.4
Don't use the pool/don't know	3.5	2.2	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Every day	28.4	43.8	27.6
3–6 days a week	28.4	21.3	31.9
Less than 3 days a week—usually weekdays	4.3	1.1	4.4
Less than 3 days a week—usually weekends	14.7	20.2	17.7
Less than 3 days a week—either/both weekdays and weekends	20.7	11.2	14.2
Don't use the pool/don't know	3.5	2.2	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3.6.2 Use of beaches

Respondents were asked about how often they go to the beach in summer.

Table 20 provides a profile of beach usage and points of interest include:

- Approximately three in ten respondents indicated that they would go to the beach at least once a week during summer. This proportion increased only slightly in the January survey and then decreased in the April survey to approximately the same level as that recorded in the December survey;

- A larger set of respondents (52.6% in the December survey, 44.4% in the January survey, 53.4% in the April survey) indicated that they go to the beach during summer on only a few occasions;
- Respondents confirmed peak use of NSW beaches on weekends and during holiday periods particularly for people using these facilities less than three days a week.

**Table 20** Use of beaches in summer

Use of beach in summer	Dec 2001 %	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Every day	23.4	17.8	19.7
3–6 days a week	8.8	12.8	8.2
1–2 days a week	17.2	18.4	16.8
1–2 times a month	22.0	21.2	20.6
1–2 times during the summer	30.6	23.2	32.8
Don't go to the beach/don't know	17.4	21.6	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Every day	4.0	2.8	4.1
3–6 days a week	8.8	12.8	8.2
Less than 3 days a week—usually weekdays	7.8	6.2	6.3
Less than 3 days a week—usually weekends	24.0	20.2	29.8
Less than 3 days a week—either/both weekdays and weekends	3.2	8.4	4.6
Less than 3 days a week—only on holidays	22.6	17.2	21.2
Less than 3 days a week—holidays plus weekdays or weekends	12.0	11.0	8.3
Don't go to the beach/don't know	17.4	21.6	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

# 3 Results

## Exposure to the 2001–2002 Safewaters campaign

### 3.7 Exposure to the 2001–2002 SafeWaters Campaign

To assess the exposure of the general community to the televised SafeWaters campaign, respondents in the post-campaign survey were asked if they were in NSW during the period in which the announcements were run and what television stations they would have been watching.

The results in Table 21 indicate that almost 99% of both post-campaign surveys respondents were in NSW during the period in which the 2001–2002 SafeWaters television announcements were being shown.

**Table 21** Location of respondents during the television campaign period

In NSW between 23 Dec 2001 and 12 Jan 2002	Jan 2002 %	April 2002 %
Yes	98.7	98.7
No	1.3	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents who were in NSW were then asked to indicate which television stations they watched during that period. Tables 22 and 23 contains a summary of this information and key observations are as follows:

- The proportion of respondents nominating each station is related to the area of NSW covered by the station and the distribution of the population;
- Approximately half of the respondents watched each of the commercial stations Channel 10, Channel 9 and Channel 7;
- In the first post-campaign survey in January more than six in ten respondents who watched the major commercial television stations recalled seeing the announcements featuring a fence around waterways in the two weeks prior to the survey.

- In the second post-campaign survey in April less than half of the respondents who watched the major commercial television stations recalled seeing the announcements featuring a fence around waterways in the two weeks prior to the survey.



# 3 Results

## Exposure to the 2001–2002 Safewaters campaign

**Table 22** Profile of television stations watched during the television campaign period

Television stations	Had watched the station	January 2002		
		Recall of ad with the fence in the past two weeks		
		Yes	No	Don't know
	%	%	%	%
Channel 10	56.1	65.3	33.6	1.1
Channel 9	53.3	62.2	36.4	1.4
Channel 7	51.3	63.1	35.8	1.1
ABC	42.8	61.3	37.6	1.1
PRIME	24.0	66.9	31.7	1.4
SBS	21.2	56.9	41.0	2.1
NBN	15.6	67.8	32.2	
PAY TV	12.9	39.9	56.1	4.0
WIN	12.8	68.5	31.5	
CAPITAL	1.9	73.5	26.5	
CTC	1.5	38.2	61.8	
NRTV	0.8	100		
Other	1.9	44.9	55.1	
None	2.4	42.9	57.1	
Don't know	0.9		100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>98.7</b>			

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The sum of the percentages in the second column recalled exceeds the total percentage as respondents were permitted to give more than one answer.
2. Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent fell into that category.



# 3 Results

## Exposure to the 2001–2002 Safewaters campaign

**Table 23** Profile of television stations watched during the television campaign period

Television stations	Had watched the station	April 2002		
		Recall of ad with the fence in the past two weeks		
		Yes	No	Don't know
	%	%	%	%
Channel 10	51.2	49.5	46.6	3.8
Channel 9	48.1	41.1	55.4	3.5
ABC	47.0	42.5	53.0	4.4
Channel 7	46.2	40.3	57.1	2.7
SBS	26.8	40.5	54.9	4.6
PRIME	19.5	60.8	37.5	1.6
PAY TV	16.0	37.9	59.7	2.3
NBN	15.0	64.9	33.3	1.8
WIN	10.8	58.7	37.1	4.1
CTC	1.6	39.1	60.9	
NRTV	0.7	67.5	32.5	
CAPITAL	0.5	80.4	19.6	
Other	0.7	25.2	74.8	
None	2.1	27.7	72.3	
Don't know	0.5	23.1	76.9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>			

**Explanatory notes:**

1. The sum of the percentages in the second column recalled exceeds the total percentage as respondents were permitted to give more than one answer.
2. Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent fell into that category.



## 4 Conclusion

The results from the three surveys conducted as part of the evaluation of the 2001–2002 SafeWaters public awareness campaign provides a range of community perceptions and behaviours in relation to water safety issues. With almost two thirds of participants indicating that they had been at an aquatic facility in early January, water safety remains an important issue for NSW residents.

A key finding of the evaluation program was an increase in the recall of key water safety messages between the pre-campaign survey and the first post-campaign survey. Significantly more respondents indicated that they had seen or heard a message about water safety when surveyed after the first televised campaign in January when compared to the pre-campaign survey in December. However it should be noted that the results for the same question in the second post-campaign survey in April returned to the same levels as the pre-campaign survey.

When respondents were asked whether they recalled the image of a fence around waterways, almost 60% of respondents in the first post-campaign survey recalled this image. Respondents in the second post-campaign survey were less likely to have recalled the image than respondents to the first post-campaign survey, but more than twice as likely as those respondents from the pre-campaign survey.

Respondents surveyed after the first post-campaign were more likely to recall specific key water safety messages when prompted than respondents to the pre-campaign survey or the second post-campaign survey. Almost three quarters of the respondents in the first post-campaign survey recalled seeing a message in the previous two weeks about only swimming between the red and yellow flags at the beach. Approximately half of the respondents to the pre-campaign survey and the second post-campaign survey recalled seeing the same message.

Significant increases detected in awareness levels in the January post-campaign survey were positive and many of the messages cited by respondents indicated a clear recall of the televised SafeWaters campaign. However, the results recorded in the April post-campaign survey indicate that although the respondents were generally more aware of the

SafeWaters campaign and its messages than the pre-campaign respondents, they were not as aware as those respondents interviewed during the January post-campaign survey.

Community perceptions in relation to drowning prevention indicates the belief that more could be done to reduce the number of drownings. While the majority of respondents agree that more is being done when compared to four years ago, eight in ten respondents believe that more than half the drownings that still occur in NSW could be prevented. These results were consistent across the pre-campaign and post-campaign surveys, which indicates that the SafeWaters campaign had little impact on respondents' attitudes towards these particular issues.

Continuing education and awareness programs were nominated as the most effective way of reducing the number of drownings. Ensuring people and children, in particular, learn to swim was also encouraged.

When assessing their own behaviour respondents were not necessarily as safety-minded as their strong level of agreement with potential risk factors associated with drowning may have suggested. Approximately one fifth of participants indicated that they do swim alone and are not always swimming at patrolled beaches. It is possible that the true number of NSW residents who swim alone or swim at unpatrolled beaches is slightly higher as respondents may under report potentially negative behaviour. When the responses to the potential risk factors were compared between the pre-campaign and post-campaign surveys there were no statistically significant differences between them, indicating that attitudes to the statements were not dramatically affected by the televised SafeWaters campaign.

# Appendix 1 Survey questionnaire

## Safewaters 2001–2002 Evaluation Questionnaire

Good afternoon/evening my name is \_\_\_\_\_ from the Hunter Valley Research Foundation in Newcastle. We are conducting a survey on behalf of the NSW Water Safety Taskforce about community safety issues.

May I speak to the person in your household who had the last birthday, and is 15 years or older.

[IF RESPONDENT IS NOT AT HOME, ARRANGE A SUITABLE TIME TO CALL BACK]

[WHEN RESPONDENT ON PHONE REPEAT INTRODUCTION IF REQUIRED]

Would you be able to spare 10 minutes to answer some questions for me?

**Q1** Have you heard or seen any messages about water safety IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS?

# [1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

IF Q1=1

**Q2** What is one message that you remember?

[99. DON'T REMEMBER/CAN'T RECALL]

#

**Q3** In the last two weeks, have you seen a TV ad that shows a fence around waterways?

# [1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

IF Q3=1

**Q4** What messages do you remember?

[ENTER UP TO 7 MESSAGES: ONE MESSAGE PER LINE]

[99=DON'T REMEMBER]

[CODES. 1 Learn to swim and survive

[ 2 Always supervise children near water

[ 3 Never swim alone

[ 4 Only swim between the red and yellow flags at the beach

[ 5 Fence swimming pools

**Q5** Apart from those you have already told me about, can you recall any messages about water safety that you may have seen or heard IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS?

[1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

IF Q5=1

**Q6** What is one message that you remember?

[99=DON'T REMEMBER/CAN'T RECALL]

# Appendix 1 Survey questionnaire continued

**Q7** Over the past four years, do you think that community awareness of water safety has increased, decreased or hasn't changed much?

- 1 Increased
- 2 Decreased
- 3 Hasn't changed much

[DO NOT READ 8=UNSURE 9=REFUSED]

**Q8** What proportion of drownings in NSW do you think could be prevented?

[READ SCALE]

- 1 Nearly all of them
- 2 More than half
- 3 About half
- 4 Less than half
- 5 Hardly any

[DO NOT READ 8=UNSURE 9=REFUSED]

**Q9** Compared to four years ago, do you think MORE or LESS is being done to prevent drownings or near drownings?

- 1 More being done
- 2 Less being done
- 3 Hasn't been much change

[DO NOT READ 8=UNSURE 9=REFUSED]

**Q10** Thinking about the number of drownings that do occur in NSW, over the last four years, do you think the number of drownings has increased, decreased, or hasn't changed much?

- 1 Increased
- 2 Decreased
- 3 Hasn't changed much

[DO NOT READ 8=UNSURE 9=REFUSED]

## **NEW QUESTION FOR THE POST-CAMPAIGN SURVEY**

**Q10a** What do you think would be the most effective way of reducing the number of people who drown in NSW?

[99= DON'T KNOW/CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING]

RANDOM [ITEMS IN THIS QUESTION WILL BE ASKED IN A RANDOM ORDER]

**Q11** Now I am going to ask you if you agree or disagree that the following may increase the chances of drowning. In your opinion, on a scale of 1 to 5 where:

- 1=Strongly disagree
- 2=Disagree
- 3=Neither agree nor disagree
- 4=Agree, and
- 5=Strongly agree

# Appendix 1 Survey questionnaire continued

do you think...[ITEM]...increases the chances of drowning?

[DO NOT READ 8=DON'T KNOW 9=REFUSED]

being a tourist visiting a new area  
being a child under five years  
being caught in a rip in the surf  
poor swimming ability  
consuming alcohol before swimming  
swimming alone in the surf, lake or river  
unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person  
diving into water without checking the depth first  
not swimming between the red and yellow flags  
being unfamiliar with the water location

RANDOM [ITEMS IN THIS QUESTION WILL BE ASKED IN A RANDOM ORDER]

**Q12** The next question asks how often you do certain things.

The scale is: 1=Always  
2=Mostly  
3=Sometimes  
4=Rarely  
5=Never

Could you tell me how often you...[ITEM]...[DO NOT READ

7=NOT APPLICABLE/NOT APPROPRIATE 8=DON'T KNOW 9=REFUSED]

swim between the flags when at the beach  
walk alone after dark  
wear sunscreen when outdoors  
swim at patrolled beaches  
lock your car up  
avoid being in dangerous areas alone  
swim alone in the surf, lake or river  
check the depth of water before jumping or diving in  
drink and drive  
check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach  
check the temperature of the bath water before getting in  
avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm  
check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in  
wear shoes when walking on the beach  
keep a good eye out when others are in the water  
avoid travelling on public transport alone at night  
check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street

# Appendix 1 Survey questionnaire continued

check who is around before drawing money from an ATM (automatic teller machine)

ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat

take regular breaks when driving long distances

ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water

avoid swimming near board riders

**Q13** Have you been in or on the water at a pool, beach, lake, river or dam IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS?

[1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

**Q14** Do you have a swimming pool at your home?

[1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

IF Q14=1

**Q15** Is the pool fenced from the house?

[1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

IF Q14=1

**Q16** Are there self-closing gates installed?

[1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

IF Q14=1

**Q17** How often would you use the family pool in summer?

[READ SCALE]

1 Every day

2 3–6 days a week

3 1–2 days a week

4 1–2 times a month

5 1–2 times during summer

[DO NOT READ 7=DON'T USE THE POOL 8=DON'T KNOW 9=REFUSED]

IF Q17=3.OR.Q17=4.OR.Q17=5

**Q18** When you do use the pool is it usually on weekdays or the weekend?

1 Weekdays

2 Weekends

3 Either/both weekdays and weekends

[DO NOT READ 8=DON'T KNOW 9=REFUSED]

**Q19** How often would you go to the beach in summer?

[READ SCALE]

# Appendix 1 Survey questionnaire continued

- 1 Every day
- 2 3–6 days a week
- 3 1–2 days a week
- 4 1–2 times a month
- 5 1–2 times during summer

[DO NOT READ 7=DON'T GO TO THE BEACH 8=DON'T KNOW 9=REFUSED]

IF Q19=3.OR.Q19=4.OR.Q19=5

**Q20** When you do go to the beach is it usually on weekdays, the weekend or while you are on holidays?

- 1 Weekdays
- 2 Weekends
- 3 Either/both weekdays and weekends
- 4 ONLY on holidays
- 5 Holidays plus weekdays or weekends

[DO NOT READ 8=DON'T KNOW 9=REFUSED]

RANDOM [ITEMS IN THIS QUESTION WILL BE ASKED IN A RANDOM ORDER]

**Q21** IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS, do you recall seeing any messages about...

[1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

- Learning to swim and survive
- Always supervising children near water
- Never swimming alone
- Only swimming between the red and yellow flags at the beach
- Making sure swimming pools have safety fences
- Being aware of fast flowing water, submerged objects and deep water
- Being aware of changing conditions in the water
- Reading and obeying signs around waterways

## **NEW QUESTION FOR THE POST-CAMPAIGN SURVEY**

Some of these water safety messages have been shown on television commercials in NSW over the past few weeks.

**Q22** Were you in NSW any time between December 23rd 2001 and January 12th 2002?

[INCLUDE IF ONLY IN NSW FOR PART OF THE TIME]

[1. YES 2. NO 3. DON'T KNOW 9. REFUSED]

## **NEW QUESTION FOR THE POST-CAMPAIGN SURVEY**

IF Q22=1

**Q23** Could you please tell me what television stations you WATCHED DURING THAT PERIOD?

[December 23rd 2001 to January 12th 2002]

# Appendix 1 Survey questionnaire continued

[ONLY INCLUDE STATIONS THE RESPONDENTS ACTUALLY WATCHED]

- 1 Channel 7
- 2 Channel 9
- 3 Channel 10
- 4 SBS
- 5 ABC
- 6 NBN
- 7 CTC
- 8 NRTV
- 9 PRIME
- 10 WIN
- 11 Southern Cross
- Other [SPECIFY]
- [999 DON'T KNOW]

Finally a few questions to help classify your answers

**Q sex** What is your sex? [OBSERVE OR ASK]

- 1 Male
- 2 Female [9=REFUSED]

**Q age** What AGE group are you in?

- 1 15–20
- 2 21–25
- 3 26–35
- 4 36–45
- 5 46–55
- 6 56–65
- 7 66 and over [DON'T READ 9=REFUSED]

**Q pers** How many people, including yourself, live in your household?

[99=REFUSED]

**Q peru15** How many of those people are aged under 15 years?

[99=REFUSED]

**Q pcode** What is your postcode?

[TYPE IN SUBURB only IF POSTCODE UNKNOWN].

POSTCODE #

SUBURB #

# Appendix 1 Survey questionnaire

Q educ What is the highest level of education you have COMPLETED?

- 1 Never attended school, some primary school
- 2 Completed primary school
- 3 Some high school
- 4 School certificate/Intermediate/Year 10/4th form
- 5 HSC/Leaving/Year 12/6th form
- 6 TAFE certificate/diploma
- 7 University, CAE or other tertiary institution degree
- OTHER [TYPE IN ANSWER]

**That ends our questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.**



# Appendix 2 Survey respondents

Unweighted sample demographics	December 2001 %	January 2002 %	April 2002 %
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	43.3	43.5	48.9
Female	56.7	56.5	51.1
<b>Age</b>			
15–20 years	10.2	7.3	10.5
21–25 years	7.6	5.3	9.6
26–35 years	17.8	15.1	19.6
36–45 years	18.4	19.8	19.1
46–55 years	13.6	18.2	15.4
56–65 years	11.2	14.9	10.7
66 years and over	21.0	19.4	15.1
<b>Number of people in respondent household</b>			
1	17.8	20.6	9.8
2	33.1	34.3	27.6
3	14.8	15.3	21.9
4	20.8	17.8	25.1
5	8.8	8.6	10.3
6 or more	4.6	3.3	5.3
<b>Respondent location</b>			
Sydney SD	53.7	49.4	58.1
Other NSW	23.4	27.1	24.8
Hunter SD	15.4	14.3	11.0
Wollongong SD	7.4	9.2	6.2
<b>Highest level of education completed</b>			
Never attended school/some primary school	0.8	0.8	0.7
Completed primary school	3.2	1.4	1.6
Some high school	10.8	11.8	12.1
School certificate/Intermediate/Year 10/4th Form	31.9	31.0	28.1
HSC/Leaving/Year 12/6th Form	17.8	15.5	17.0
TAFE certificate/Diploma	9.2	16.3	11.9
University/CAE/other tertiary institution degree	24.8	22.2	27.6
Don't know/refused	1.4	1.2	1.0
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>500</b>

# Appendix 3 Frequency tables

## Question 11

Agreement with statements December 2001	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Refused
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Being a tourist visiting a new area	1.2	4.9	10.6	45.7	37.2	0.3	
Being a child under five years	0.2	3.7	5.5	36.9	53.2	0.2	0.2
Being caught in a rip in the surf		2.8	4.6	45.7	46.4	0.5	
Poor swimming ability	0.3	1.3	3.4	39.4	55.5	0.1	
Consuming alcohol before swimming		1.7	2.7	26.7	68.8	0.2	
Swimming alone in the surf, lake or river		3.0	7.0	41.5	48.5		
Unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person	0.6	2.7	6.6	49.1	40.8	0.2	
Diving into water without checking the depth first	0.6	0.7	2.5	31.8	64.4		
Not swimming between the red and yellow flags	0.6	1.6	4.1	42.2	51.1	0.4	
Being unfamiliar with the water location	0.1	2.3	8.0	45.2	43.9	0.4	

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

## Question 11

Agreement with statements January 2002	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Being a tourist visiting a new area	0.8	7.7	7.3	39.1	44.6	0.4
Being a child under five years	0.4	4.0	6.7	36.0	52.5	0.4
Being caught in a rip in the surf	0.7	2.1	5.7	42.6	48.8	0.1
Poor swimming ability	0.4	1.7	3.9	38.8	55.1	
Consuming alcohol before swimming	0.3	0.8	1.8	27.2	69.9	0.1
Swimming alone in the surf, lake or river	0.7	4.9	10.1	37.3	47.0	0.1
Unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person	0.3	3.8	7.3	46.4	41.0	1.2
Diving into water without checking the depth first	0.3	0.8	3.1	31.9	63.9	0.1
Not swimming between the red and yellow flags	0.3	1.7	7.9	41.6	48.3	0.2
Being unfamiliar with the water location		4.7	4.6	44.8	45.8	0.1

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

# Appendix 3 Frequency tables continued

## Question 11

Agreement with statements April 2002	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Being a tourist visiting a new area	0.6	6.2	12.2	30.7	50.3	
Being a child under five years	2.0	2.9	7.1	27.5	60.1	0.5
Being caught in a rip in the surf	0.2	1.3	8.9	30.8	57.1	1.7
Poor swimming ability	0.6	2.8	3.3	30.3	62.7	0.3
Consuming alcohol before swimming	2.0	1.0	3.4	21.9	71.1	0.7
Swimming alone in the surf, lake or river	1.5	3.1	9.1	32.2	54.2	
Unseen submerged objects that may hinder a person	1.6	4.9	7.6	37.1	48.7	0.2
Diving into water without checking the depth first	2.2	0.7	3.4	24.7	68.2	0.6
Not swimming between the red and yellow flags	1.2	2.6	8.2	34.6	53.0	0.4
Being unfamiliar with the water location	0.6	3.7	6.8	38.1	50.0	0.7

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.



## Appendix 3 Frequency tables continued

### Question 12

Usual behaviour December 2001	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable/ appropriate	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Swim between the flags when at the beach	63.5	13.1	5.6	1.0	2.4	14.4	
Walk alone after dark	9.6	8.9	20.0	19.8	41.1	0.5	
Wear sunscreen when outdoors	36.5	19.7	21.4	9.7	12.1	0.4	0.2
Swim at patrolled beaches	43.4	16.7	13.9	5.5	4.8	15.4	0.3
Lock your car up	76.7	6.9	5.4	1.0	1.9	8.0	0.2
Avoid being in dangerous areas alone	67.5	16.4	8.6	2.5	4.0	0.9	0.1
Swim alone in the surf, lake or river	3.4	3.7	10.4	12.3	60.1	9.8	0.2
Check the depth of water before jumping or diving in	59.6	13.0	6.7	3.1	3.3	14.3	
Drink and drive	3.3	0.5	3.3	3.9	81.1	7.7	0.2
Check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach	56.3	14.9	9.9	4.4	3.4	10.5	0.6
Check the temperature of the bath water before getting in	72.5	6.1	4.8	4.2	3.8	8.4	0.2
Avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm	40.8	22.2	13.0	10.2	13.7		0.2
Check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in	53.9	9.7	7.9	2.6	3.4	22.4	0.1
Wear shoes when walking on the beach	25.7	11.5	21.0	13.2	23.3	5.3	0.2
Keep a good eye out when others are in the water	58.7	21.1	13.1	2.3	1.4	3.5	
Avoid travelling on public transport alone at night	44.5	11.7	8.0	4.5	10.2	20.9	0.2
Check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street	90.7	5.8	2.2	0.7	0.4	0.1	0.2
Check who is around before drawing from an ATM	43.1	15.5	11.1	7.2	9.2	13.8	0.2
Ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat	59.1	5.2	7.4	2.4	2.4	23.3	0.2
Take regular breaks when driving long distances	52.7	19.3	9.7	2.1	1.5	14.6	0.2
Ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water	85.2	4.1	2.8	1.8	0.6	5.5	
Avoid swimming near board riders	52.6	18.3	6.6	2.3	4.3	15.9	

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

## Appendix 3 Frequency tables continued

### Question 12

Usual behaviour January 2002	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable/ appropriate	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Swim between the flags when at the beach	55.2	14.8	9.3	2.4	1.9	16.5	
Walk alone after dark	7.7	9.6	22.6	17.4	42.1	0.6	
Wear sunscreen when outdoors	43.0	17.7	17.4	9.3	12.3	0.3	
Swim at patrolled beaches	47.0	16.0	11.6	5.5	2.1	17.8	
Lock your car up	79.2	7.5	4.6	1.6	1.2	5.8	0.1
Avoid being in dangerous areas alone	70.6	13.2	8.9	3.8	3.1	0.4	0.1
Swim alone in the surf, lake or river	6.1	3.5	11.2	11.0	55.2	12.8	
Check the depth of water before jumping or diving in	63.3	13.2	4.0	1.6	1.9	16.0	
Drink and drive	2.9	0.2	3.7	8.4	79.7	4.9	0.1
Check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach	58.1	13.3	9.2	3.3	2.3	13.8	
Check the temperature of the bath water before getting in	73.7	4.2	5.1	1.6	5.2	10.1	
Avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm	38.7	21.9	16.7	10.2	11.6		0.9
Check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in	55.5	7.4	3.8	2.6	5.4	25.3	0.1
Wear shoes when walking on the beach	24.4	12.8	17.8	12.3	26.4	6.3	
Keep a good eye out when others are in the water	65.3	13.2	12.7	2.0	2.3	4.3	
Avoid travelling on public transport alone at night	48.7	8.4	11.6	4.3	9.6	17.3	
Check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street	92.7	5.4	1.1	0.5	0.3	0.1	
Check who is around before drawing money from an ATM	46.8	11.9	13.8	6.5	8.4	12.7	
Ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat	59.5	4.8	4.9	4.0	1.5	25.0	0.3
Take regular breaks when driving long distances	59.9	14.6	7.6	3.4	3.3	11.0	0.2
Ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water	84.2	5.1	0.7	1.1	0.2	8.7	
Avoid swimming near board riders	50.3	16.0	7.3	2.7	5.6	18.0	

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

## Appendix 3 Frequency tables *continued*

### Question 12

Usual behaviour April 2002	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not applicable/ appropriate	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Swim between the flags when at the beach	60.2	8.7	6.7	2.3	4.3	17.7	0.1
Walk alone after dark	11.9	9.7	20.0	17.1	41.1	0.1	
Wear sunscreen when outdoors	36.7	20.7	16.4	9.2	16.7	0.3	
Swim at patrolled beaches	47.7	13.0	10.8	6.2	4.7	17.6	
Lock your car up	73.9	8.8	4.6	2.1	2.3	8.2	
Avoid being in dangerous areas alone	65.1	18.2	8.6	2.5	4.2	1.2	0.4
Swim alone in the surf, lake or river	4.8	1.1	9.9	11.1	59.7	13.4	
Check the depth of water before jumping or diving in	60.9	7.9	6.5	2.9	1.3	20.4	
Drink and drive	0.5	0.2	3.3	6.3	77.4	12.4	
Check for and be aware of strong currents in rivers or at the beach	53.9	11.1	9.9	2.4	3.3	18.7	0.7
Check the temperature of the bath water before getting in	76.1	4.8	4.3	0.5	4.1	10.1	0.2
Avoid talking on the phone during a thunderstorm	34.7	23.4	15.6	7.6	18.7		
Check for submerged objects in rivers, lakes or dams before diving in	47.0	6.6	7.9	1.8	2.9	33.8	
Wear shoes when walking on the beach	21.7	12.0	17.1	12.7	27.9	8.6	
Keep a good eye out when others are in the water	58.6	16.4	12.2	2.6	2.5	7.8	
Avoid travelling on public transport alone at night	38.9	10.5	7.7	5.2	16.7	21.0	
Check for traffic, left and right, before crossing the street	91.1	3.9	3.4	0.3	0.9	0.4	
Check who is around before drawing money from an ATM	44.7	14.8	12.1	5.5	8.0	14.7	0.3
Ensure everyone has a lifejacket if out on a boat	57.2	4.3	5.6	0.7	4.0	28.1	
Take regular breaks when driving long distances	53.5	15.4	10.3	3.5	2.3	14.8	0.2
Ensure that young children are constantly supervised when they are in the water	81.9	3.2	1.4			13.5	0.1
Avoid swimming near board riders	52.1	13.5	6.4	3.0	4.4	20.5	

**Explanatory note:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

## Appendix 3 Frequency tables continued

### Question 21

Prompted recall of key water safety messages December 2001	Yes %	No %	Don't know %	Refused %
Learning to swim and survive	52.2	47.2	0.5	0.1
Always supervising children near water	47.3	51.8	1.0	
Never swimming alone	24.5	74.3	1.0	0.2
Only swimming between the red and yellow flags at the beach	51.9	45.8	2.3	
Making sure swimming pools have safety fences	38.5	60.1	1.2	0.3
Being aware of fast flowing water, submerged objects and deep water	19.8	79.7	0.5	
Being aware of changing conditions in the water	25.6	69.8	4.2	0.4
Reading and obeying signs around waterways	31.9	63.4	4.7	

**Explanatory notes:** Blank cells in the table indicate that no respondent nominated the response option for that item.

### Question 21

Prompted recall of key water safety messages January 2002	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
Learning to swim and survive	57.4	41.9	0.7
Always supervising children near water	61.3	37.8	0.9
Never swimming alone	43.2	55.8	1.1
Only swimming between the red and yellow flags at the beach	74.6	24.7	0.7
Making sure swimming pools have safety fences	48.7	50.8	0.5
Being aware of fast flowing water, submerged objects and deep water	39.7	58.6	1.6
Being aware of changing conditions in the water	45.3	53.5	1.3
Reading and obeying signs around waterways	52.6	46.8	0.6

### Question 21

Prompted recall of key water safety messages April 2002	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
Learning to swim and survive	52.6	45.8	1.7
Always supervising children near water	47.5	51.5	1.0
Never swimming alone	33.8	64.2	2.0
Only swimming between the red and yellow flags at the beach	52.3	45.9	1.9
Making sure swimming pools have safety fences	43.1	56.3	0.6
Being aware of fast flowing water, submerged objects and deep water	30.2	67.7	2.1
Being aware of changing conditions in the water	31.4	67.1	1.5
Reading and obeying signs around waterways	38.6	59.8	1.6

**Prepared by**  
**NSW Water Safety Taskforce 2003**

**Members of the NSW Water Safety Taskforce**

Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguard Association

Austswim NSW

Community Relations Commission

Farmsafe NSW

Kellogg Australia

Municipal Employees Union

NSW Department of Education and Training

NSW Department of Health

NSW Department of Local Government

NSW Department of Sport and Recreation

NSW Fisheries

NSW Local Government and Shires Association

Premier's Department

Surf Life Saving NSW

The Royal Life Saving Society Australia (NSW Branch)

Waterways Authority