

2019 Provisional Drowning Report

Introduction

In 2019 there were 82 recreational (intending to be in the water) and non-recreational (no intention of being in the water) preventable drowning fatalities. Non fatal drowning statistics have not yet be analysed and will be available after March 2020 and included in the final 2019 drowning report.

This provisional annual drowning report provides statistics and insights based on the 82 incidents in 2019, which is an increase of 16, or 24 percent, compared to the 66 preventable drowning fatalities in 2018. The 2019 total is more than the 2014 – 2018 Five Year Average of 79 and less than the 2017 total of 91.

Drowning is defined as 'the process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion/immersion in liquid; outcomes are classified as death (fatal) or morbidity (non-fatal) - International Life Saving Federation, 2016

Summary of Findings for Preventable Fatal Drownings

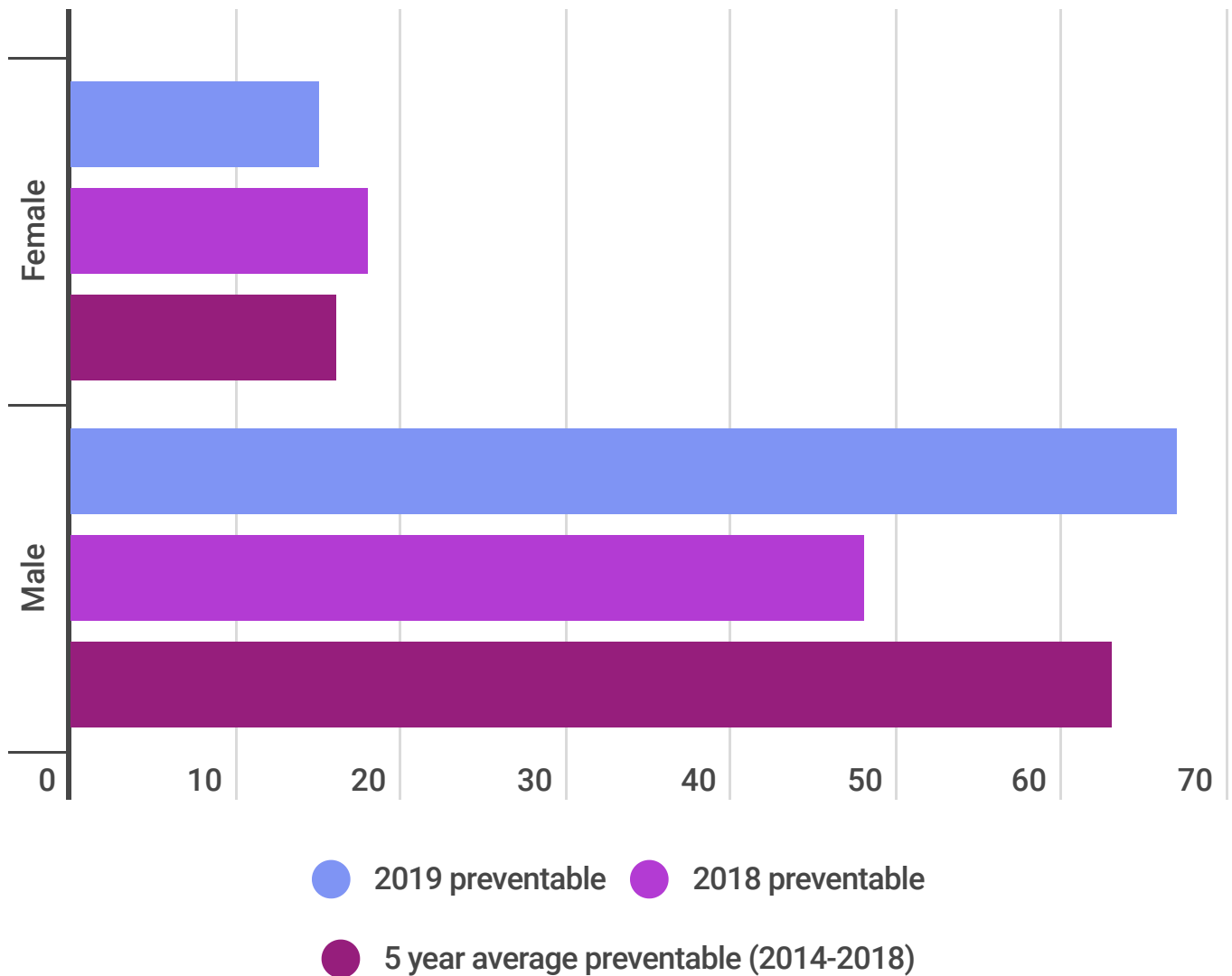
New Zealand's total per 100,000 preventable drowning death rate for 2019 is 1.8. This is an increase on the 5 year per 100,000 rate of 1.6 per year.

AGE

Incident numbers across the age groups remains similar to 2018 with the exception of an increase in the Under Fives to 7 in 2019 compared to 3 in 2018 and an increase in the 55 – 64 years to 12 in 2019 compared to 6 in 2018. The most preventable drownings are again in the 65+ group who have 15 preventable in 2019, down 2 from 2018 when they had 17, the highest group in that year also.

GENDER

Fatal drownings continue to be a male problem with 66 or 81 percent of all fatalities.



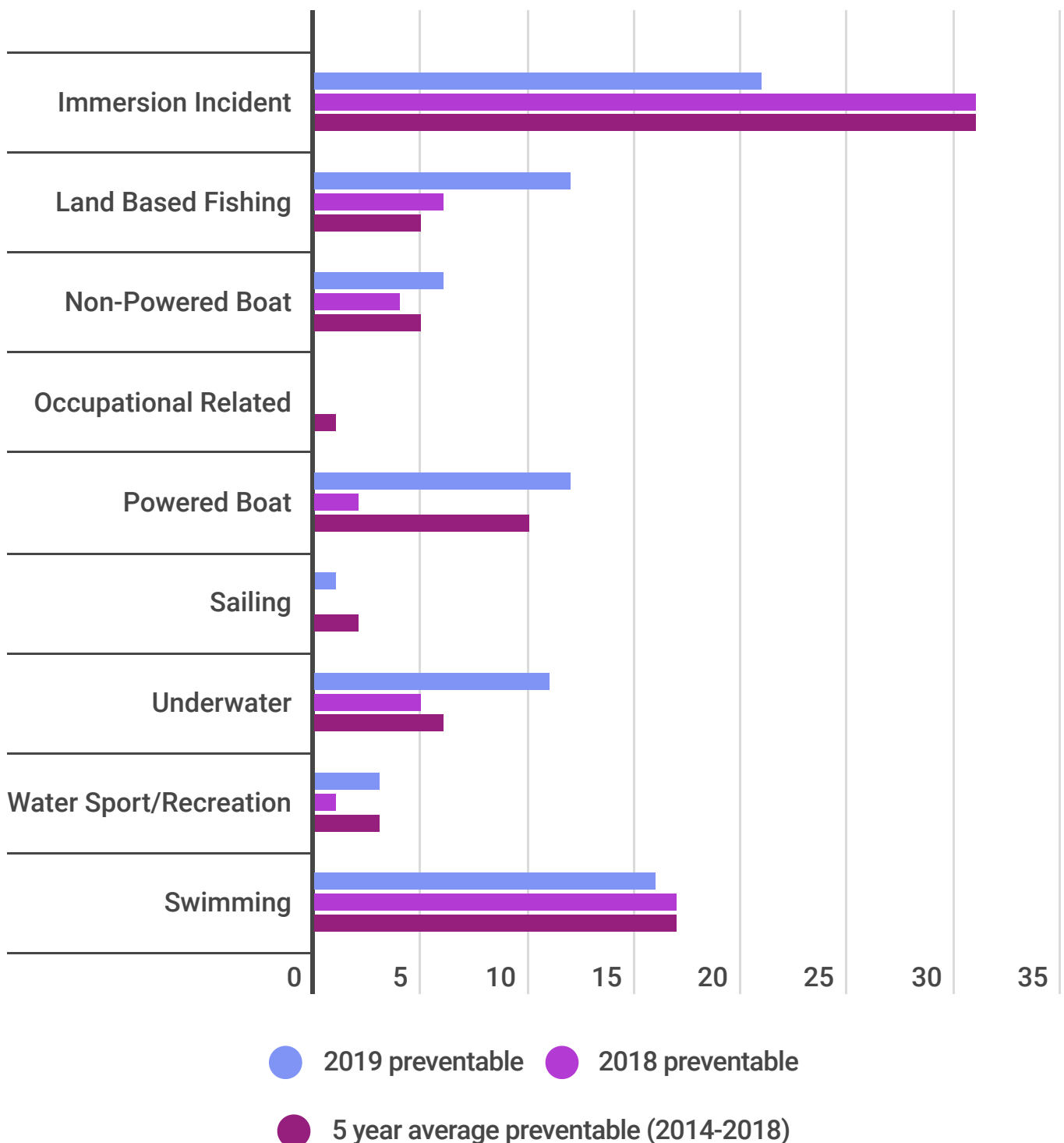
REGIONS

Regionally, and based on numbers, Auckland (18), Northland (16), Waikato (7), Otago (7) and Southland (6) have presented with the highest number of drowning fatalities in 2019. Fatalities for the high risk activities of Land Based Fishing and Underwater Diving are present in these regions and in Hawke's Bay. West Coast (5) and Wellington (5) have shown an increased in fatalities compared to 2 each in 2018.

ACTIVITY

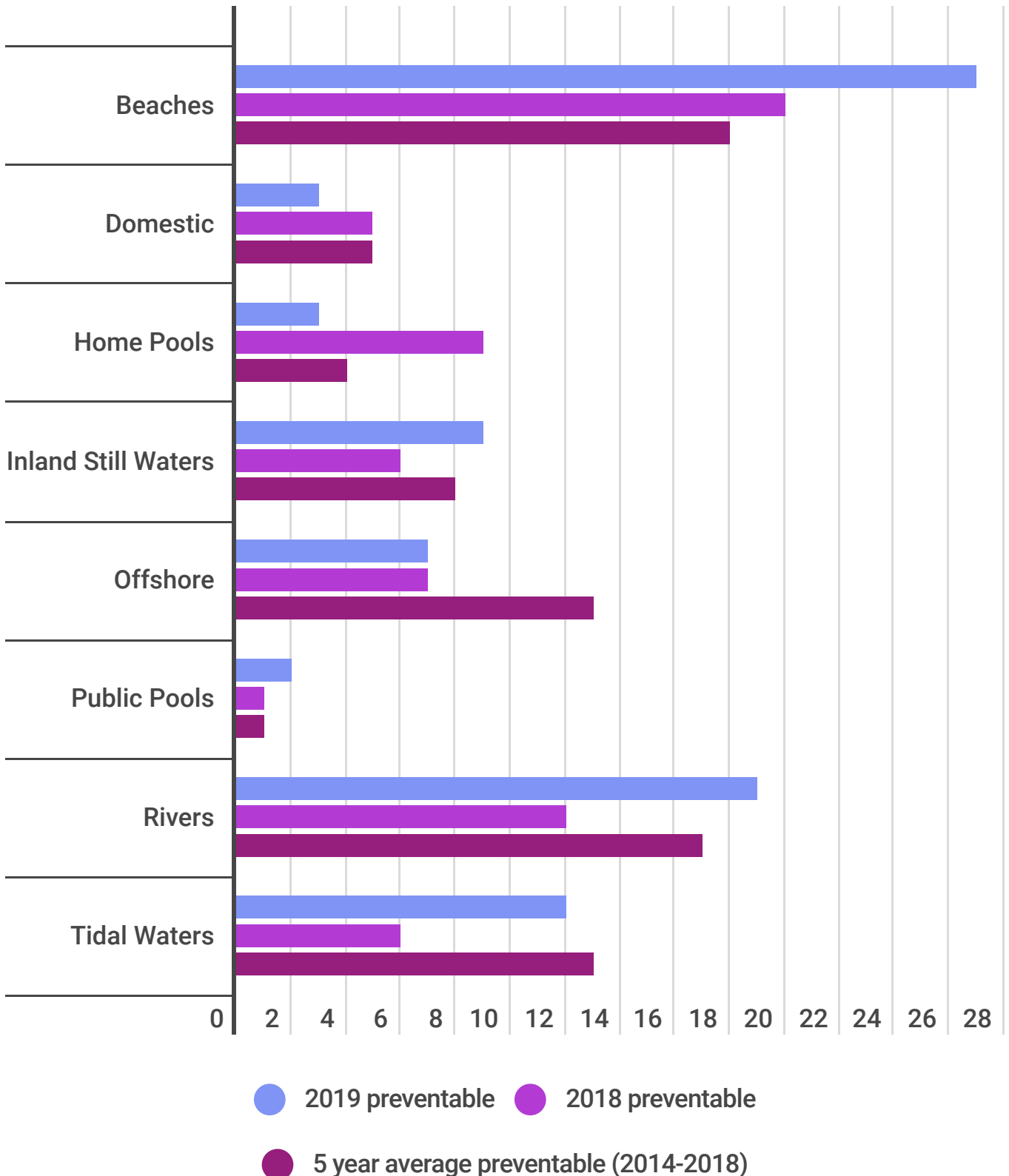
Accidental Immersion incidents dropped significantly in 2019 with 19, compared to 31 in 2018 and 31 for the 2014 – 2018 Five Year Average.

Significant increases in incidences occurred in Land Based Fishing (12) and Underwater Diving (11) activities. A spike in Powered Boat incidences occurred compared to 2018 but this number of 11 drowning fatalities is similar to the 2014 – 2018 Five Year Average of 10.

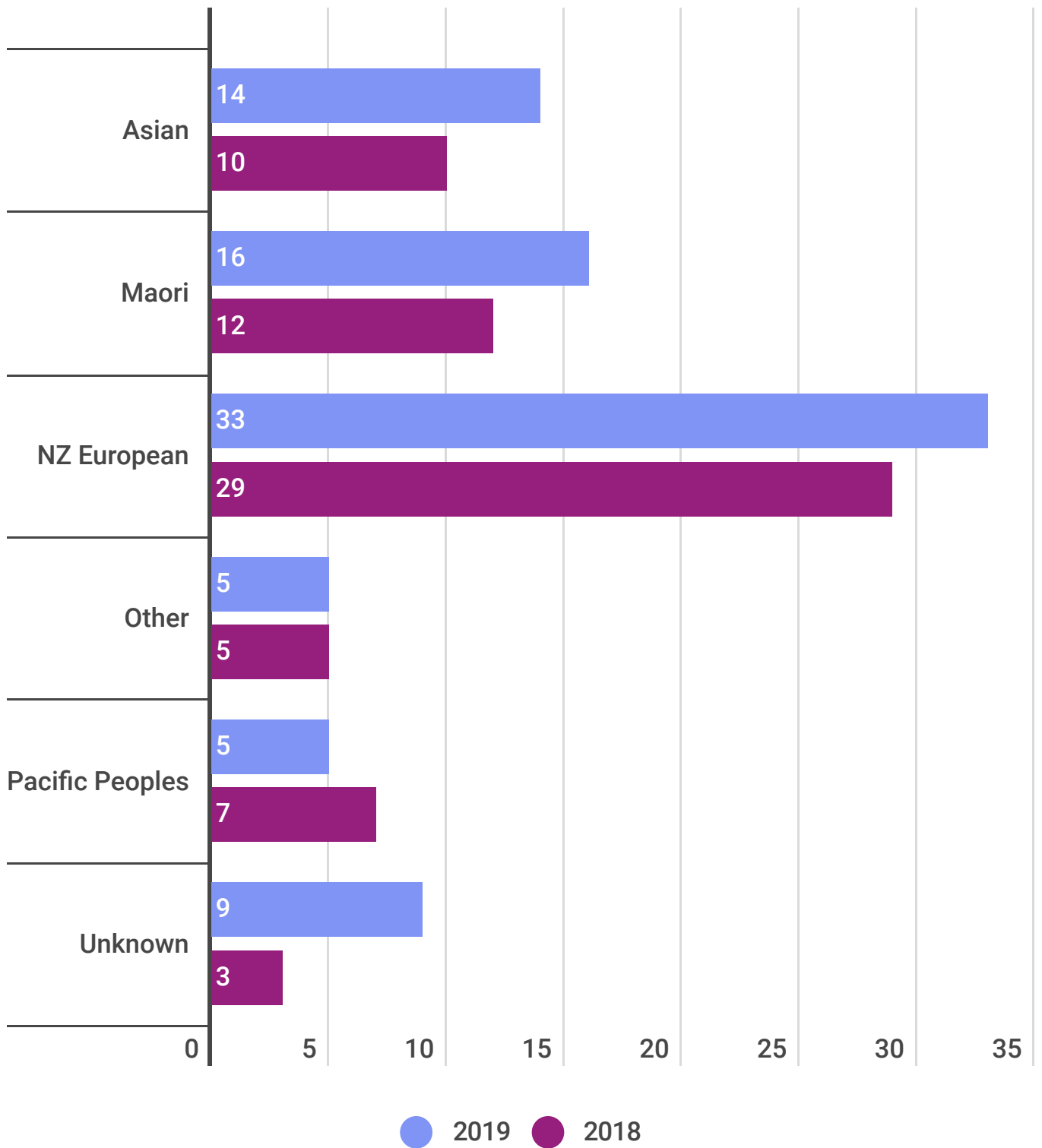


ENVIRONMENT

Beach numbers have spiked to 27 in 2019 compared to 20 in 2018 and 18 for the 2014 – 2018 Five Year Average. River numbers have increased to 19 in 2019 compared to 12 in 2018 and 17 for the 2014 – 2018 Five Year Average. Domestic and Home Pool numbers have reduced with 3 each.



ETHNICITY



Totals

Activity	2019 preventable	2018 preventable	5 year average preventable (2014-2018)
Immersion Incident	21	31	31
Land Based Fishing	12	6	5
Non-Powered Boat	6	4	5
Occupational Related	-	-	1
Powered Boat	12	2	10
Sailing	1	-	2
Underwater	11	5	6
Water Sport/Recreation	3	1	3
Swimming	16	17	17
Total	82	66	79*

Age Group	2019 preventable	2018 preventable	5 year average preventable (2014-2018)
00-04	7	3	4
05-14	4	1	2
15-24	11	8	15
25-34	14	10	12
35-44	8	10	11
45-54	10	11	11
55-64	13	6	10
65+	15	17	12
Total	82	66	79*

Environment	2019 preventable	2018 preventable	5 year average preventable (2014-2018)
Beaches	27	20	18
Domestic	3	5	5
Home Pools	3	9	4
Inland Still Waters	9	6	8
Offshore	7	7	13
Public Pools	2	1	1
Rivers	19	12	17
Tidal Waters	12	6	13
Total	82	66	79*

Ethnicity	2019 preventable	2019 preventable	2013-2017 Average
Asian	14	10	10
Maori	16	12	18
NZ European	33	29	39
Other	5	5	7
Pacific Peoples	5	7	7
Unknown	9	3	1
Total	82	66	

Gender	2019 preventable	2018 preventable	5 year average preventable (2014-2018)
Female	15	18	16
Male	67	48	63
Total	82	66	79*

Regions	2019 preventable	2018 preventable	5 year average preventable (2014-2018)
Auckland	18	14	16
Bay of Plenty	4	10	8
Canterbury	5	3	6
Gisborne	1	1	2
Hawkes Bay	2	6	4
Manawatu-Wanganui	1	2	2
Marlborough	2	2	1
Northland	16	8	9
Otago	7	5	4
Southland	6	1	4
Taranaki	2	1	2
Tasman	1	3	2
Waikato	7	6	10
Wellington	5	2	6
West Coast	5	2	3
Total	82	66	79*

Drowning data is sourced from Water Safety New Zealand's DrownBase™ and the figures provided are provisional as at 09/01/2020.