



# **Water Safety New Zealand Survey**

February - March 2018

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# 1. Executive summary

This report presents the results of the third annual Water Safety Survey. It was an online panel survey of n=1,094 members of the New Zealand public conducted from 14 February to 19 March 2018. Appropriate weights for region, ethnicity and age were applied to ensure that the results are nationally representative.

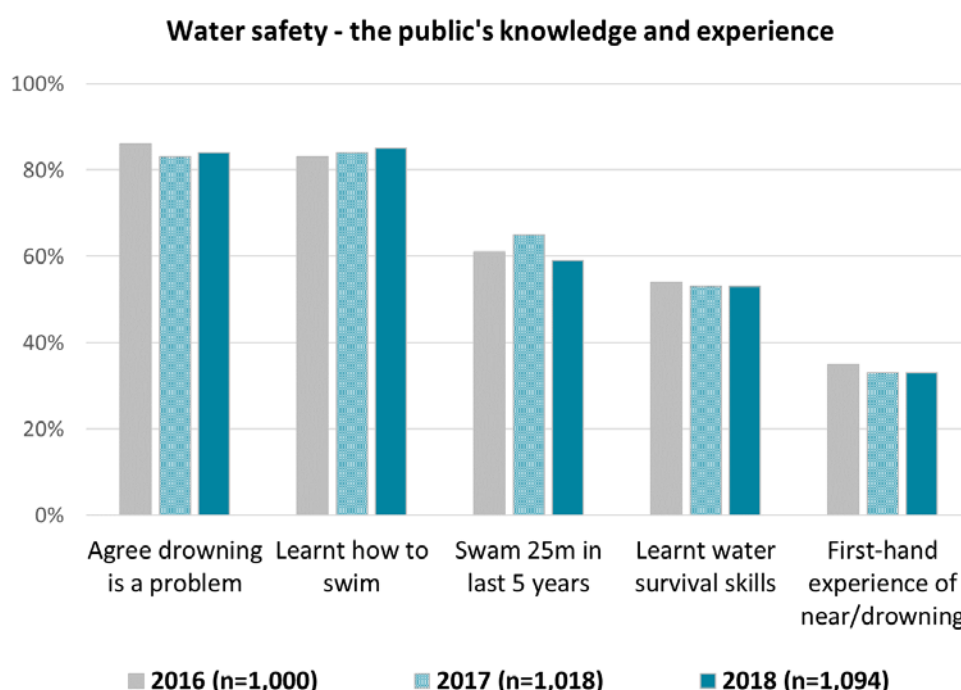
## 1.1 Knowledge

Overall, the results from the three surveys to date present a consistent picture, and there continues to be strong public concern around the issue of drownings in New Zealand:

- **84%** agreed that drowning is a problem in New Zealand.
- **35%** reported they had first-hand experience of a serious situation in the water

In terms of swimming and survival skills experience:

- **85%** said they have learnt how to swim
- **59%** have swum at least 25m in any manner including doggy paddle within the last 5 years – down from 65% last year
- **53%** said they have learnt some water survival skills.



## Water safety messages

**58%** said they have seen or heard water safety messages in the past year – consistent with previous surveys. The strongest messages the public remember (unprompted) are:

- “Swim between the flags, in supervised areas” – mentioned by 23%
- “Wear your life jacket” – recalled by 16%

## Trends over the past three years

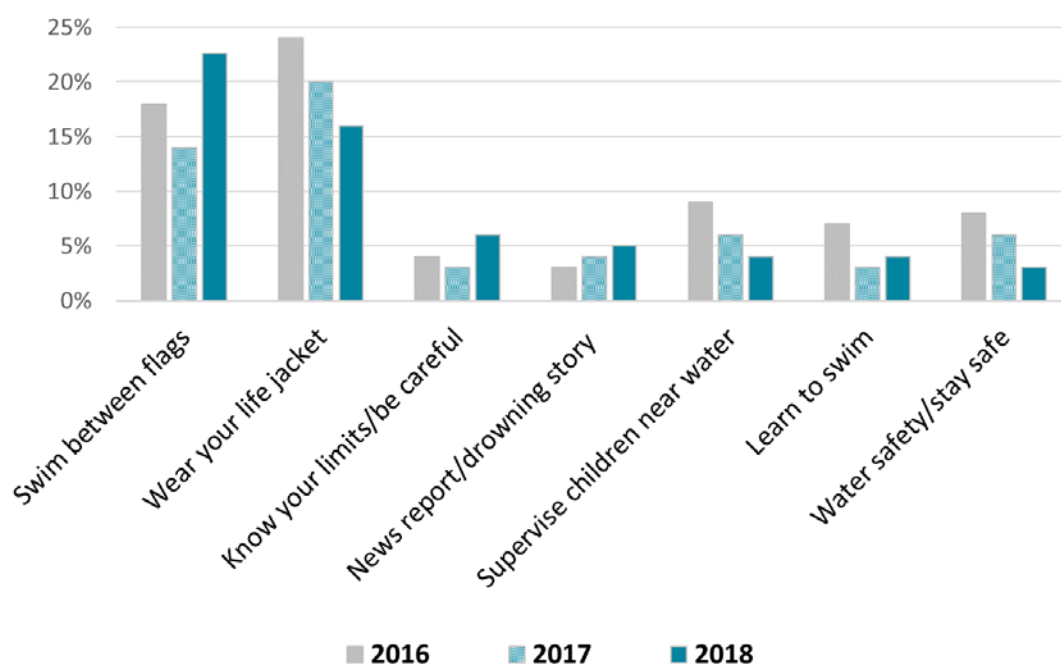
It is encouraging that:

- The proportion who remember seeing or hearing the “Swim between the flags” message has significantly increased to 23% in 2018 - up from 14% in 2017
- The number who mentioned the “Know your limits” message has increased to 6% in 2018 (from 3% in 2017).

However, recall of several key water safety messages appears to be significantly declining:

- Recall of “Wear your life jacket” has fallen from 24% in 2016 to 16%
- “Supervise children near water” has gone from 9% in 2016 to just 3%
- The “Learn to swim” message has dropped from 7% in 2016 to 4%, and “Stay safe/water wise” has dipped from 8% in 2016 to 3%

**Water safety messages recalled from past year...**



## Perceptions of risk

The public were asked to identify who they thought was at most risk of drowning, and where this was most likely to happen. The majority thought:

- Men are more at risk of drowning than women (83% compared to 17%)
- Younger people are more at risk, especially teenagers and young adults – aged 15 to 24 (73%), pre-schoolers (70%), and children aged 5 to 14 (62%)
- Beaches are riskiest (at 72%), followed by rivers (47%), and coastline (45%)

**Ranked by public in top 3 – highest risk**

Age groups most at risk	2018	2017	2016
Less than 5 years	70%	75%	72%
5 to 14 years	62%	62%	63%
15 to 24 years	73%	68%	78%
<b>Gender risk</b>			
Males	83%	83%	85%
Females	17%	17%	15%
<b>Riskiest locations</b>			
At the beach	72%	65%	75%
Rivers	47%	49%	43%
Coastline, rocks etc.	45%	43%	50%
At private homes	35%	43%	40%

Respondents ranked their top 3 locations with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest risk of drowning.

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## Public perceptions of the main factors contributing to drownings

The public were asked to comment on what they think are the main factors that contribute to more than 100 people dying by drowning each year in New Zealand.

**72%** mentioned **risky behaviour** contributing to drownings, including: not checking conditions, over confidence, carelessness, swimming in dangerous places, being unsupervised, ignoring warnings, alcohol, not wearing life jackets, and being unprepared.

**42%** talked about **lack of safety skills and knowledge**, including not being able to swim, lack of water safety knowledge, lack of warning signs, tourists and immigrants being unaware of New Zealand conditions, and the closure of school pools.

- > *Not being able to swim, swimming lessons being so expensive and not available to everyone, schools not all having swimming pools or ensure pupils have access to swimming lessons, swimming in inappropriate clothing, i.e. swimming in clothes, or not wearing life jackets, or conditions that are not safe.*

### What do you think are the main contributing factors?

	2018	2017	2016
<b>Total - Risky behaviour:</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>78%</b>
Not respecting risks/can't read conditions	22%	18%	21%
Over-confidence	17%	19%	26%
<b>Total: Lack of swimming skills/water safety knowledge</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>46%</b>
Lack of swimming skills	28%	24%	30%
Lack of water safety knowledge	16%	17%	23%

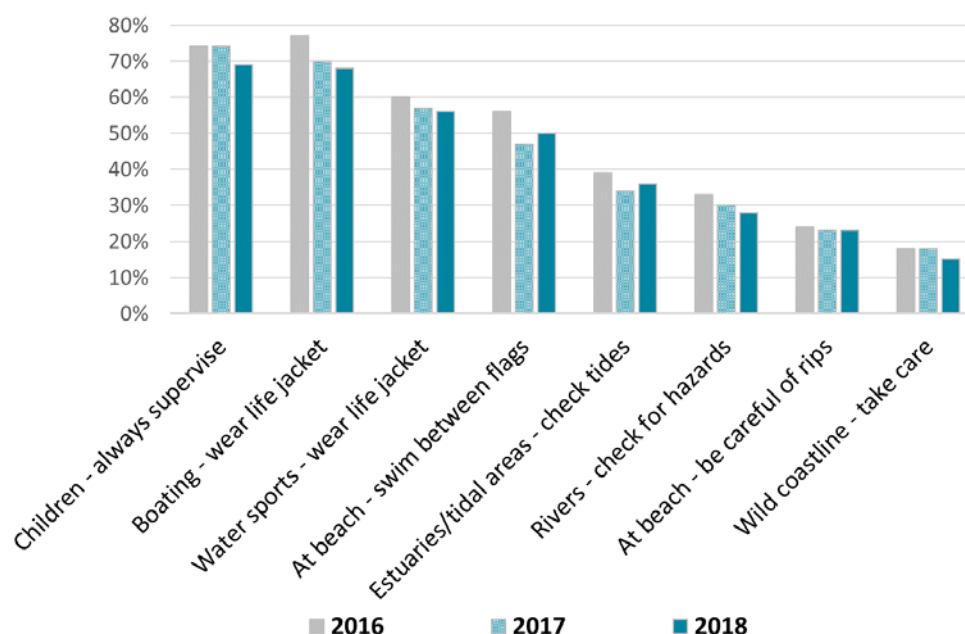
Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## Water safety knowledge

The public were asked what they think are the main “safety tips” people should remember when participating in a variety of water related activities. There appears to be an overall trend of declining water safety knowledge over the past three years, with most mention of:

- “Always supervise children” (69%) – down from 79% in 2016 and 2017
- “Wear a life jacket” for boating (68%) – down from 77% in 2016, and for recreational water sports (56%)
- “Swim between the flags at the beach” (50%) – down from 56% in 2016

### Unprompted recall of main safety tips for...



## Is the water safety message getting through to the appropriate groups?

On the whole, the level of knowledge of the main safety tips amongst the public was similar to that amongst actual participants, for example:

- Boaties were just as likely (69%) as the general public (68%) to mention “*wear a life jacket*” when boating (the apparent difference is not statistically significant)

However, there were higher levels of water safety knowledge shown by specific groups:

- Pre-school caregivers (78%) were more likely than the public (69%) to say people should remember to “*always supervise young children*” around water
- Fishers were more likely than the public to mention:
  - “*Check or know the tide times*” at an estuary (45% c.f. 36%)
  - “*Check for hazards*” at rivers (35% c.f. 28%)
  - “*Coastline waves can be unpredictable*” (23% c.f. 15%)
- Swimmers were more likely than the public to mention “*watch for rips*” at a beach (28% c.f. 23%)
- People who indicated they had first-hand experience of a serious situation in the water were more likely than other groups to recall the appropriate safety measures

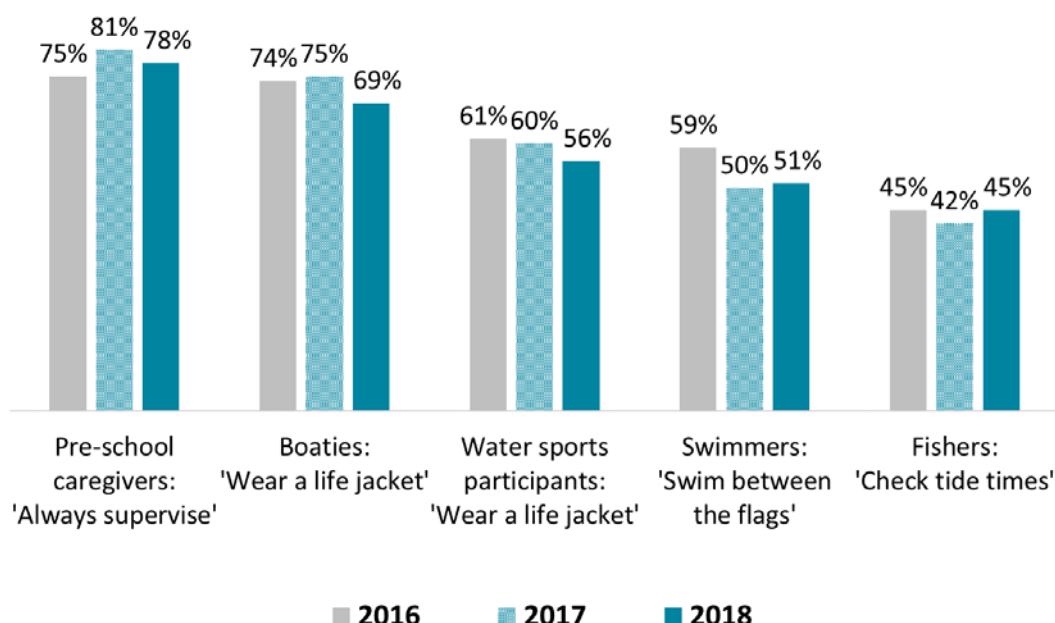
### Recall of main safety tips for...

Amongst:	NZ Public	vs. Participants	
<b>Being around water with young children</b>		<b>Pre-school caregivers</b>	
“Always supervise”	69%	78%	
“Stay within arm’s length”	7%	7%	
<b>Recreational boating</b>		<b>Boaties</b>	
“Wear a life jacket”	68%	69%	
“Check the weather”	7%	9%	
“Be prepared”	6%	7%	
<b>Taking part in recreational water sports</b>		<b>Water sports participants</b>	
“Wear a life jacket”	56%	56%	
“Be safe, go with experienced people”	7%	9%	
<b>Visiting a beach for swimming/surfing</b>		<b>Swimmers</b>	
“Swim between the flags”	50%	51%	
“Be careful, watch for rips/tides/currents”	23%	28%	
<b>Visiting estuaries or tidal areas</b>		<b>Fishers</b>	
“Check/know the tide times”	36%	45%	
“Keep safe/be careful/ check conditions”	8%	8%	
<b>Visiting rivers for recreation</b>		<b>Fishers</b>	<b>Swimmers</b>
“Check for hazards”	28%	35%	31%
“Take a buddy”	11%	12%	13%
“Take care, be sensible”	12%	13%	10%
<b>Visiting the wild coastline or rocks</b>		<b>Fishers</b>	<b>Swimmers</b>
“Take care, stay on the track, off rocks”	15%	13%	15%
“Coastline waves can be unpredictable”	15%	23%	16%
“Know the tide times”	16%	20%	18%

The proportion of swimmers who recall the “*swim between the flags*” message has declined from 59% in 2016 to 51% in 2018. However, key message recall for other appropriate groups has remained fairly stable.

### Are water safety messages getting to appropriate groups?

Unprompted recall of key safety messages by participants....



## 1.2 Behaviour and risks

Everyone was asked to indicate which of a series of water related activities they had done in New Zealand within the past 12 months. The 2018 survey showed the level of participation in activities has been fairly consistent over the past three years, with three-fifths (58%) swimming, and half (50%) wading or paddling in water.

However, over the last 12 months fewer:

- Looked after a pre-school child (28% - down from 33% in 2016)
- Went sailing (5% - down from 7% in 2017)

Significantly more people reported that they:

- Participated in power boating or jet skiing (12% - up from 9% in 2017)
- Accidentally fell in the water (7% - up from 4% in 2016)

### Which of these activities have you done in the last 12 months in New Zealand?

	2018	2017	2016
Swimming	58%	58%	57%
Wading/paddling in water	50%	49%	48%
Looked after a preschool child	28%	32%	33%
Fishing, or food gathering	25%	27%	24%
Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddle-boarding	17%	17%	16%
Power boating, or jet skiing	12%	9%	10%
Surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing	11%	10%	10%
Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	11%	11%	9%
Accidentally fallen in water	7%	5%	4%
Sailing	5%	7%	5%
Have not done any of these in last 12 months	21%	19%	21%
True n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

## Swimming, and wading/ paddling

The most common places people went swimming were public swimming pools (55%), unpatrolled beaches (49%), patrolled beaches (45%), and private swimming pools (40%).

- In the 2018 survey, more people reported being at:
  - Unpatrolled beaches for swimming (49%) up from 39% in 2016
  - Patrolled beaches for wading/paddling (41%) up from 33% in 2016
- Two-thirds (64%) had been paddling at an unpatrolled beach or coastline, 41% at a patrolled beach, and 36% at a river or stream

## Patrolled beaches

There has been a steady increase in the proportion who said they “*always swim between the flags*” over the past two years (from 40% in 2016 to 50% in 2018). In contrast, 24% of waders “*always waded between the flags*”, fewer “*usually waded between flags*” (from 48% in 2017 to 34% in 2018), and an increased number only “*sometimes*” do (from 29% in 2017 to 39% in 2018).

The reasons why swimmers and waders don’t stay between the flags have remained consistent since the 2016 survey.

- Why swimmers said they don't swim between the flags:
  - *Flagged area too narrow and crowded* 43%
  - *Life guards gone/no flags* 26%
  - *I have skills/confident swimmer* 22%
- Why wader/paddlers said they don't wade/paddle between the flags:
  - *Walking along beach/shallow water* 46%
  - *Flagged area too busy/crowded* 22%

## Swimmers at unpatrolled beaches

**49%** of those who had been swimming in the past 12 months swam at an unpatrolled beach:

- Almost half (45%) said they always follow the advice of safety notices, while around a third always check the water for strong currents and rips (38%), and never get in without safety checks (37%)
- It’s concerning that 78% reported they never (or sometimes) ask for advice on where it’s safe to swim. Additionally, a third (32%) don’t check for rips or strong currents often, and 28% said they never (or sometimes) perform safety checks before entering the water.
- Two-fifths (40%) sometimes (or more often) swim alone
- 70% don’t always check the weather report
- A fifth (21%) at least sometimes enter the water under the influence of alcohol

## Swimmers at rivers

**25%** of those who had been swimming in the past 12 months swam in a river or stream:

- There appears to have been an improvement in the proportion who always check the weather report before going to the river – up from 16% in 2016 to 28% in 2018
- However, just 12% always ask for advice on where it is safe to swim, and the proportion who never ask for advice has increased from 14% in 2016 to 23% in 2018
- A third (32%) have swum at rivers while under the influence of alcohol
- Less than half always check the water for hidden obstacles (43%) or check for strong currents and depth (44%)
- Two-fifths (40%) have swum alone at least some of the time

## Supervising preschool children

**28%** had looked after a preschool child in the last 12 months:

- 48% supervised them at a public swimming pool
- Another 48% supervised preschool children in the bath – down from 58% in 2017
- 31% supervised preschool children at unpatrolled beaches or private swimming pools
- 30% supervised at patrolled beaches – up from 23% two years ago
- When looking after a preschool child near water - 72% said they always stay within arm's reach of the child, while 86% said they never leave the child unsupervised
- 66% reported they never get distracted (by a phone etc.)

## Fishing or food gathering

**25%** had been fishing (or food gathering) in the last 12 months:

- 49% were at an unpatrolled beach or coastline and 36% were off shore or at sea
- There is an increase in those fishing at lakes or ponds (up 6% from last year) as well as at patrolled beaches or coastline (up 6% from 2016)
- The number who always go out fishing alone has dropped to 59% from 72% in 2016
- Three-fifths (59%) always check the weather forecast before heading out
- A fifth (18%) have been fishing under the influence of alcohol themselves (or others)

## Canoeing, kayaking, rowing or SUP

**17%** had been canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddleboarding in the last 12 months:

- 48% had been at an unpatrolled beach or coastline (up from 34% in 2016), 34% at a lake or pond, and 28% at a river
- 58% said they always wear a lifejacket – down from 69% in 2017
- Half (51%) never go out alone
- Those who never check the weather forecast dropped by half since 2016 to 5%
- Three out of ten (29%) never carry at least one waterproof type of communication

## Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)

**11%** had done underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.) in the last 12 months:

- 53% had done these underwater activities at an unpatrolled beach or coastline, while 34% were off-shore or at sea
- There was an increase in the proportion who were at a patrolled beach or coastline (from 11% in 2016 to 26% in 2018)
- 51% said they always check the weather forecast and conditions
- 29% sometimes (or more frequently) go out by themselves
- 42% sometimes (or more frequently) separate from their buddy

## Surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing

**11%** had been surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing in the last 12 months:

- 61% were at patrolled beaches, and 52% at unpatrolled beaches
- The proportion who surfed, boogie boarded or wind surfed at rivers has gone up by 10% since 2016 to 16% in 2018
- Although 61% never wear a life jacket, this is an improvement from 77% in 2016
- However, there has been an increase in the proportion who sometimes go out just by themselves from 31% in 2017 to 43% in 2018. Plus, a decrease in the number who never go out alone from 56% in 2016 to 38% in 2018.

## Power boating or jet skiing

**12%** had been power boating, or jet skiing, in the last 12 months:

- 45% of power boaters were off-shore, 37% on a lake, and 36% at an unpatrolled beach
- The proportion “never” in charge of power boats has dropped by nearly a half to 25% compared to the past two years
- 60% said they always wear a life jacket while power boating, 83% that there are always enough life jackets for everyone, and 67% always have all required safety equipment
- Nobody said that they (or others) always went out power boating under the influence of alcohol – down from 6% last year
- 47% of jet skiers were at a lake/pond, 38% at an unpatrolled beach, and 34% at a patrolled beach
- 71% of jet skiers said they always wear a life jacket
- 51% always check the weather report before going out jet skiing – up from 23% in 2016

## Sailing

**5%** had been sailing in the last 12 months – please note the smaller group responding to these questions

Sailing in **small boats** (6m or less):

- Around half had been sailing at unpatrolled beaches (45%) or off-shore, and a third at rivers (34%) – up from 9% in 2017, or in harbour/estuary areas (33%)
- Half said all people on board always wear life jackets (49%), while two-thirds (36%) said there are not always enough life jackets for everyone
- 58% said they always have the required safety equipment on board (up from 33% in the 2016 survey), and half (51%) go out by themselves at times
- Just under half are at times under the influence of alcohol (44%)
- When in charge of a small boat, three-fifths always check the weather or marine forecasts before they go out (60%), and 43% check a water or boating safety code, website or app (up from 4% in the 2016 survey)
- When in charge, three-fifths (60%) always carry at least one waterproof way of communicating, and 32% always carry two different types of communication

Sailing in **large boats**:

- Nearly three-fifths were off shore or at sea (58%) and two-fifths in harbours/estuaries (40%)
- A third said all people on board always wear life jackets (32%). Only 3% said that people never wear life jackets – down from 19% in 2016
- Under half (43%) reported there are not always enough life jackets for everyone
- Three-fifths (65%) said they always have the required safety equipment on board, while three out of five noted there are never too many people on board (62%)
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) said at times they (or others) are under the influence of alcohol
- When in charge of a large boat, only a third always check the weather or marine forecasts before they go out (31%) – down significantly from 74% last year, while a fifth always check a water or boating safety code, website or app (16%)
- When in charge, two-fifths carry at least one waterproof way of communicating (41%), and 33% carry two different types of communication – down from 73% last year

## Accidental falls in water

**7%** said they had accidentally fallen in water in the last 12 months – up from 4% in 2016.

- 39% fell in a river or stream, 19% at a lake or pond, and 18% in a harbour or estuary
- There was a decrease in the proportion who experienced a fall at an unpatrolled beach (from 26% in 2017 to 10% in 2018)

### 1.3 Risk profiles

People who participated in specific water-related activities were asked a series of risk-related questions. For each individual, the number of reported risk taking behaviours was assessed against their number of activities to provide a risk score (%), then classified into the risk profiles.

<b>Risk Profiles 2018</b>	<b>Proportion of population*</b>	<b>No Risk</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Med</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>2018 High + Med risk</b>	<b>2017 High + Med risk<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>2016 High + Med risk<sup>a</sup></b>
Fishing & food gathering	25%	6%	33%	46%	15%	<b>61%</b>	58%	65%
Water Sports	28%	27%	29%	20%	24%	<b>44%</b>	46%	43%
Boating	14%	32%	38%	22%	8%	<b>30%</b>	31%	27%
Pre-school Caregivers	28%	50%	30%	14%	6%	<b>20%</b>	22%	21%
Swimming (Beach or River)	43%	41%	50%	6%	3%	<b>9%</b>	10%	<b>24%</b>

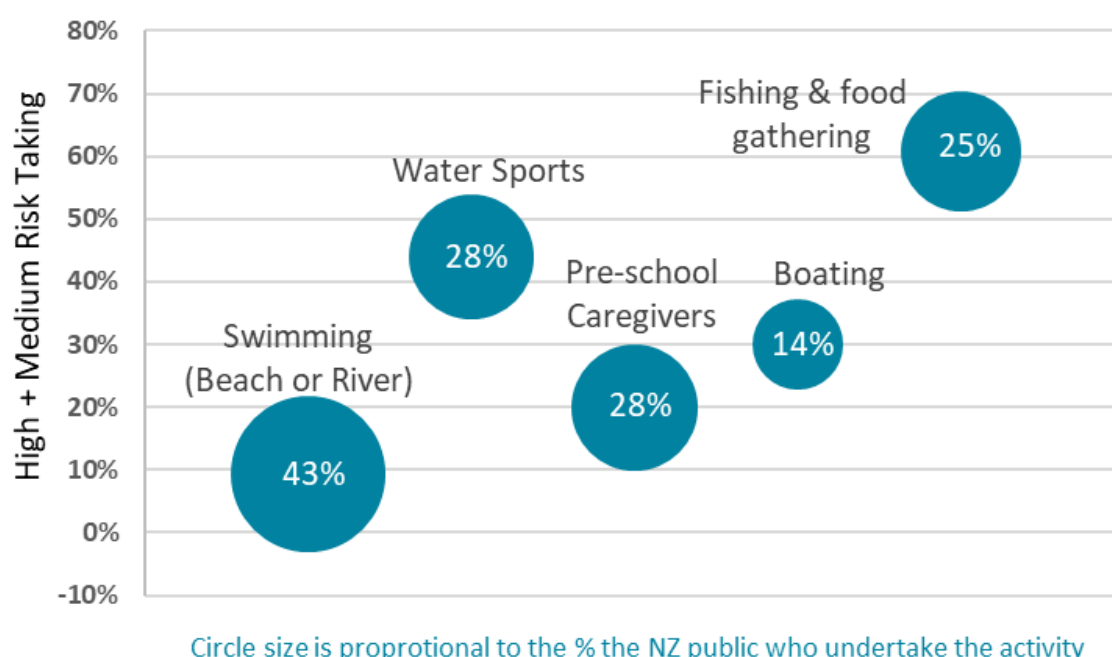
\*Reported they did this activity in last 12 months in New Zealand.

<sup>a</sup> Additional risk questions were added retroactively to 2017's data, these questions were not present in 2016's survey. Note: to maximise available responses, "Boating" includes sailing and power boating, and "Water Sports" covers canoeing, surfing, jet skiing, underwater activities etc.

#### The activity with the highest proportion of medium to high risk takers was fishing...

Fishers/food gatherers have consistently been the riskiest group over the three Water Safety Surveys. **94%** of fishers/food gatherers reported some unsafe behaviour such as not always going with someone, not wearing a life jacket or checking the weather report and conditions.

- The second highest risk activity group is water sports – 44% were rated medium to high risk (they don't always follow water safety guidelines)
- Swimmers had the lowest risk profile – only 9% were rated medium to high risk (down from 24% in 2016)



## Who are the risk takers?

- **Fishing and food gathering** – Risk takers are very representative of this community. High-risk takers are typically young males, living in Auckland, of Pacific Island descent, who do not look after young children.
- **Water sports** – Risk takers, in general, appear slightly dominated by the elderly or young men, but they are fairly representative of the water sports community. High-risk takers tend to be under 45, Asian, who do not look after pre-schoolers.
- **Swimming** – Risk takers appear to be aged under 35, but particularly in the 15 to 24 age-bracket. They also appear to be Asian, and fall within the lowest income bracket. High-risk takers are predominantly male, under 35, Asian, and earning less than \$50,000 per annum.
- **Boating** – Young males who are middle income earners, Asian, live in Northland or the East North Island are the boating risk takers this year. High-risk takers tend to be under 45, from cities, Asian and those in the middle and upper income brackets.
- **Preschool caregivers** – Risk takers tend to be young, Asian, men. High-risk takers are males aged under 45 years old, city-based and likely of Asian or New Zealand Māori descent.

## 1.4 In conclusion

The results of the 2018 Water Safety New Zealand Survey reinforce the findings of the previous two surveys in 2016 and 2017. Overall, the results have been very consistent over the three surveys. For the third time, a third of those surveyed (35%) said they had a first-hand experience of a serious situation in the water, as an observer, rescuer or someone who got into trouble:

- > *Myself. I was 16 at Muriwai Beach I went out too far and was struggling to get back and started to sink, I remember a program on tv, they said don't struggle just lie back and the tide took me back to shore, whew close call it was.*
- > *I was about 3 or 4 or maybe 5, was in a surf beach in Whangarei. Got caught in a rip, was taken out to sea. My dad came out to me, he grabbed a surfer's surf board, and we both kicked ourselves back to shore. After that my mum decided I have swimming lessons. Was the best thing I could have done. #muchneededlessons*

Although 84% of the public agreed that drowning is a problem in New Zealand, only 58% said they have seen or heard water safety messages in the past year. Once again, the third who had personal experience of a near (or real) drowning had higher awareness of water safety messages. They continue to take water safety more seriously. Does this suggest more personal or realistic messages are required to make a difference to the drowning statistics?

### Trends over the past three years

It is encouraging that:

- The proportion of the public who remember seeing or hearing the “Swim between the flags” message has significantly increased to 23% in 2018 - up from 14% in 2017, this could be related to the drop in the number of preventable fatal drownings at beaches in 2017
- There appears to have been an improvement in the proportion of swimmers at rivers who always check the weather report before going to the river – up from 16% in 2016 to 28% in 2018
- The number who always go out fishing alone has dropped to 59% from 72% in 2016

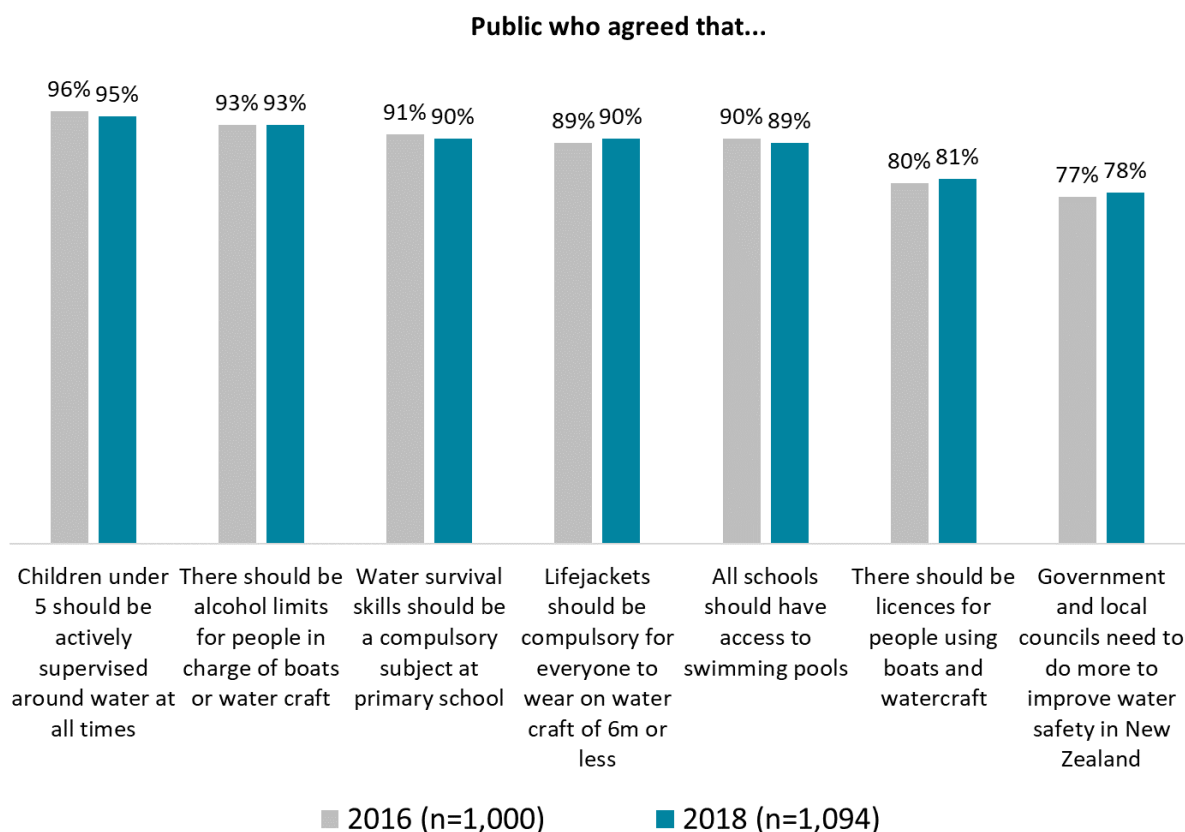
The Water Safety New Zealand 2017 Provisional Preventable Drowning Fatalities Report shows there have been increased preventable fatal drownings in home swimming pools, domestic areas, off shore or at sea, and of children aged under 5 years. Therefore, it is concerning that the 2018 Water Safety Survey results show declines in:

- Recall of several key water safety messages including *“Wear your life jacket”* and *“Supervise children near water”*
- Public perceptions of private homes as high-risk locations for drowning
- An overall trend of declining water safety knowledge over the past three years.

Between 2016 and 2017, the number of preventable fatal drownings:

- In those aged over 65 years has doubled, and the survey results show increased risk taking amongst this group particularly for water sports.
- Amongst Asians has more than tripled, and this group are over represented for taking risks in water sports, swimming, boating, and looking after pre-schoolers

Looking ahead, this Water Safety Survey shows there is strong public interest and concern about the number of drownings in New Zealand, and the majority surveyed agreed on the importance of key water safety issues and initiatives.



## 2. Background

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Water Safety New Zealand commissioned **MMResearch™** to conduct a Benchmark survey in 2016 designed to reveal the public's attitudes towards, knowledge of, and adherence to key elements of the water safety message.

- The idea was to use the Benchmark Survey to build a picture of “where we are at now” in terms of attitudes, knowledge and behaviours, and then to use a Monitor (or “Pulse”) Survey to provide periodic updates for key measures of attitude, knowledge and behaviour to determine the rate and direction of change.
- The Monitor Survey would be an occasionally repeated, abbreviated version that would focus on a set of core measures from the Benchmark Survey to detect and monitor changes over time (for example in risk behaviours like kayaking without a life jacket).

This report presents the results from the second Monitor survey. It was essentially a repeat of the 2017 Monitor survey, and was conducted online from 14 February to 19 March 2018.

### 2.1 Research objectives

Broadly, the key outcome we were working towards with this survey was:

- To estimate the proportion of the NZ public who indicate they behave in a responsible manner around water in specific situations, e.g. when boating etc.

The first outcome for the NZWS Sector Strategy 2020 is:

- A changed culture in which every New Zealander:
  - Understands the risks associated with water, and
  - Has the ability to survive in, on or around water.

In terms of understanding the risks associated with water, the survey aims to measure:

- The understanding people have of key safety behaviours
- The level of public concern, e.g. is drowning perceived to be a problem in NZ?
- Public perceptions of who is most at risk of drowning (& most risky locations)
- What people say are the main factors that contribute towards the more than 100 people drowning each year

It is difficult to measure if people have the ability to survive in, on or around water. Previous research has shown that many people overestimate their ability and underestimate the risk. So, we have several questions related to this:

- Recent swimming experience, plus
- Questions which are asked of people who have participated in specific water-related activities. These aim to assess whether people follow safety guidelines, with the assumption that this makes them more likely to survive, e.g. if they “always” wear a life jacket when “sailing” etc.

### Limitation

It should be noted that while a survey of 1,000 members of the New Zealand public provides well for measures relating to “where we are at now” in terms of **attitudes** and **knowledge** of the public in general, not everyone necessarily participates in the activities for which we intend to measure **behaviours**. Those sample sizes or sub sets are smaller. For example, in this 2018 survey:

- 58% said they have been swimming in New Zealand in the last 12 months
- Only 5% have been sailing in the past year

## 2.2 Research methodology

This was an online panel survey. It was designed to be accessible on the respondents' computer or mobile device.

- The questionnaire was developed in consultation with Water Safety New Zealand and key stakeholder organisations.
- The stated population of interest for this research was the "New Zealand Public 15 years and over." The sample frame used to deliver this population was a 165,000-strong online panel of the NZ public. The overall achieved sample size was set at a minimum  $n=1,000$ .
- Potential respondents were randomly selected from a Research Now online panel. They had to be at least 15 years old.
- Oversampling was employed in an endeavour to provide maximum cell sizes for analysis and to counter expected response resistance from groups such as young people.
- Appropriate weights for gender, region, ethnicity and age were developed and applied to ensure that the results are nationally representative.

### Demographics

An important part of being able to usefully analyse any set of data is to actively ensure that any sub populations (groups) of particular interest are adequately represented in the sample and in great enough numbers that estimates can be made to allow comparison to be made between these groups. Using the online panel means that we were able to pre-stratify our sample to ensure that smaller groups were as well represented as possible.

Our understanding is the following demographic groups are of specific interest to WSNZ:

- Age / age group
  - Region
  - Ethnicity
  - Gender
  - Parents of 5 year olds and younger
  - Parents of children aged 5 to 14 years
- (Other demographics can be added on request.)

We proposed that the survey sample would be managed in such a way as to actively:

- Balance gender
- Over-sample for Māori/Pacific Peoples
- Under-sample European NZers
- Over-sample parents of children aged under 5 years
- Regions (16) are proportionally represented

This allowed us a certain degree of control in seeking to minimise the margin of error associated with statistics for any of the sub population groups. In this way we will provide the best possible quality statistics that the survey frame and budget can support.

When statistics are used to present the full national picture, post-stratification weights were calculated and applied to ensure that those groups who are over or under represented numerically in the final sample contribute appropriately to the overall estimate.

This study was designed and conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice established by The Research Association of New Zealand. **MMResearch™** believes that this report represents a fair, accurate and comprehensive analysis of the information collected, with all sampled information subject to normal statistical variance.

## 2.3 Sample

The population of interest for this research was the “New Zealand Public 15 years and over.”  
The overall achieved sample size was n=1,094.

	Est. % of Total Population*	Achieved Sample	Maximum Margin of Error (approx.)
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	49%	530	4.3%
Female	51%	564	4.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
New Zealand European	64%	539	4.2%
New Zealand Māori	14%	213	6.7%
Pacific Peoples	7%	85	10.6%
Asian	11%	139	8.3%
Other	4%	118	9.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
<b>Parents with children:</b>			
0-4 years old	-	161	7.7%
5-14 years old	-	231	6.4%
<b>Total Parents</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
<b>Youth (aged 15 - 25)</b>			
Male	8%	124	8.8%
Female	8%	146	8.1%
<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>6.0%</b>
<b>Region</b>			
Auckland	35%	370	5.1%
Bay of Plenty	6%	62	12.4%
Canterbury	13%	140	8.3%
Gisborne	1%	15	25.3%
Hawke's Bay	3%	36	16.3%
Manawatu-Wanganui	5%	69	11.8%
Marlborough	1%	11	29.5%
Nelson	1%	14	26.2%
Northland	4%	32	17.3%
Otago	4%	49	14.0%
Southland	2%	20	21.9%
Taranaki	2%	29	18.2%
Tasman	1%	10	31.0%
Waikato	10%	94	10.1%
Wellington	11%	132	8.5%
West Coast	1%	11	29.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>3.0%</b>

\*Source: 2018 Projected Data from StatsNZ Census 2013

### Note on reading tables

As WSNZ is interested in trends over the past three years, the tables in this report show any statistically significant difference compared to 2018.

- **Blue** indicates when a result (from 2016 or 2017) is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates when a result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

## 3. Knowledge

### 3.1 Level of public concern

The first survey questions measured the New Zealand public's knowledge of water safety facts and messages.

**84%** agreed drowning is a problem in New Zealand. This level of concern has remained stable over the past three years of the survey.

#### In your opinion, is drowning a problem in New Zealand?

	2018	2017	2016
Yes	<b>84%</b>	83%	86%
No	<b>9%</b>	9%	8%
Don't know	<b>7%</b>	7%	6%
n =	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result. No colour indicates no significant difference.

#### Demographic variations

Those more likely to agree that drowning is a problem in New Zealand were:

- NZ Europeans 88%
- Caregivers (of children aged 5 years or older) 85%

For the third year in a row, the group less likely to see drowning as a problem was:

- People of Asian ethnicities 63%

### Safety issues

When asked to rank a series of safety issues:

- **33%** rated water safety as one of their top 3 safety issues of concern - this is consistent over the three surveys.
- Concern about bullying in schools and the workplace is up to 43%, from 36% in 2016.

#### Which of these safety issues are of most concern to you?

	2018	2017	2016
Child abuse	<b>72%</b>	74%	73%
Domestic violence	<b>64%</b>	<b>69%</b>	68%
Road safety	<b>53%</b>	52%	56%
Bullying in schools and the workplace	<b>43%</b>	40%	<b>36%</b>
<b>Water Safety</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>36%</b>
Cyber safety	<b>20%</b>	19%	17%
Workplace safety	<b>15%</b>	13%	14%
n =	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

Note: Respondents ranked the issues from 1 to 7, shows % who mentioned issue in their top 3.

#### Demographic variations in safety concerns

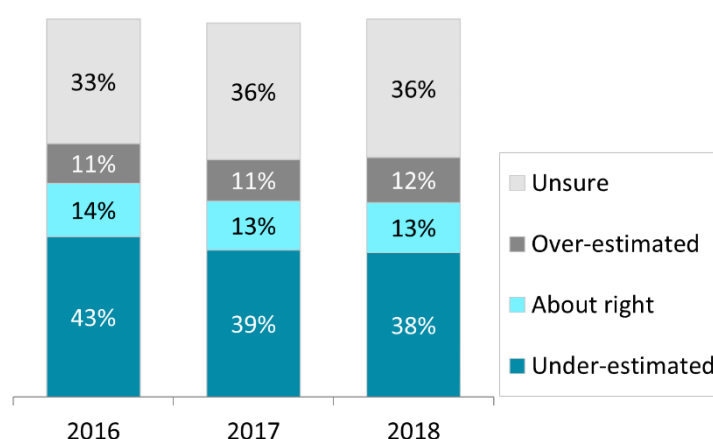
- Water safety concerns ranked consistently across regions, genders and ethnicities.
- Pre-school caregivers were more likely to include water safety in their top 3 safety issues (39%), while respondents without the responsibilities of children up to 18 years were less likely (31%).

## Public perceptions about the scale of the problem

The public were asked to give an estimate for the number of people they think die by drowning, and the number who receive drowning related injuries each year in New Zealand.

The average estimates given by the public continued to be higher than the WSNZ 5-year averages. However, a large proportion of the public were unsure, and the averages were skewed by some significant overestimates. So overall, 38% underestimated the true level of deaths by drowning in New Zealand each year, 13% gave a fairly good estimate, and 12% overestimated. These estimates are very similar to 2017.

**New Zealand public's average estimate of deaths by drowning each year is...**



## Each year, how many people in New Zealand do you think?

	2018	2017	2016	5-year average*
<b>Die by drowning?</b>				
Average number:	257	170	123	80
<b>Receive drowning related injuries?</b>				
Average number:	555	329	396	180
<b>n =</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>	

\*5 year averages provided by WSNZ: Drowning deaths and injuries average from 1 Jan 2013 – 31 Dec 2017. Averages are determined from unweighted data.

## Public perceptions of the number of people in New Zealand who...

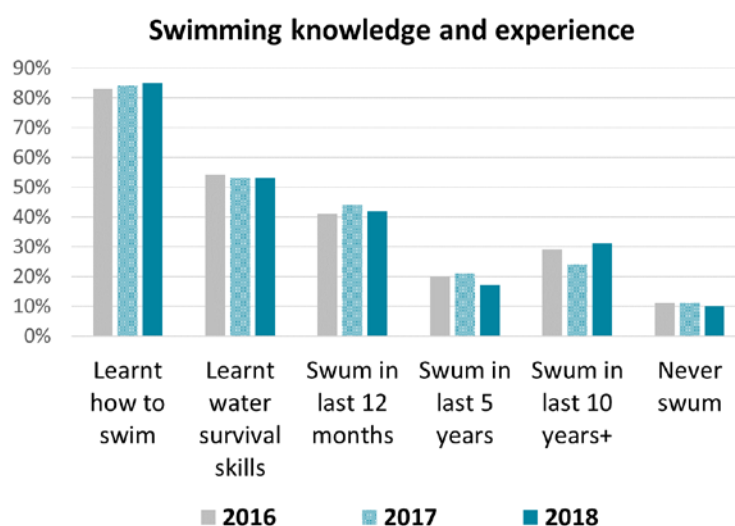
Estimate is:	low	about right	high	Don't know
<b>Die by drowning</b>	<75	75-125	125+	
<b>2018</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>36%</b>
2017	39%	13%	11%	36%
2016	<b>43%</b>	14%	11%	33%
<b>Receive drowning related injuries</b>	<150	150-200	200+	
<b>2018</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>52%</b>
2017	28%	8%	13%	50%
2016	27%	9%	14%	50%

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

### 3.2 Swimming and survival skills knowledge

All respondents were asked if they have learnt to swim, swum recently, and if they have learnt any water survival skills like what to do if caught in a rip. This year's results are consistent with those from the past two years:

- **85%** said they have learnt how to swim
- **59%** have swum at least 25m in any manner including doggy paddle within the last 5 years – down from 65% last year
- **53%** said they have learnt some water survival skills.



<b>Total who agreed they have:</b>		<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Learnt how to swim		85%	84%	83%
Learnt any water survival skills		53%	53%	54%
Swam at least 25m in any manner, in the last:				
– 12 months		42%	44%	41%
– 5 years		17%	21%	20%
– 10 years		9%	7%	8%
– More than 10 years ago		22%	17%	21%
– Never		10%	11%	11%
<b>True n=</b>		<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

### Demographic variations

Key differences:

- Aucklanders are more likely to have swum at least 25m (50%)
- Those from the West North Island and males are more likely to have learnt water survival skills – 63% and 56%, respectively
- Pacific (75%) and Asian (68%) Peoples were less likely to have learnt to swim
- Asian People were also less likely to have learnt any water survival skills (35%) or swam at least 25m in the past year (32%)
- Māori were more likely to have swum at least 25m in the past year (50%)

### 3.3 Water safety messages

The key water safety campaigns and key messages from the 2017/18 summer are summarised below, (list provided by Water Safety New Zealand).

#### Key messages

Remember the water safety code:

- Be prepared;
- Watch out for yourself and each other;
- Be aware of the dangers;
- Know your limits; and
- Avoid alcohol.

#### Key water safety campaigns

##### Summer campaign, 'The Swim Reaper'

Using Instagram to really connect with our target audience of 15 to 34-year-old males, who make up around 30% of the drowning toll.

- Uses geo-targeting technology to connect with them at known high risk locations.
- We want to connect with them before they potentially make bad decisions which can have deadly consequences.
- "Swim dumb and you're done."

##### 'Water Skills for Life' initiative

We want every 5 to 13-year-old in New Zealand to learn Water Skills for Life which is now supported by The Warehouse.

- This aims to teach broader fundamental skills for life-long water safety to ensure children are aware of the dangers of water and can act to utilise their skills.
- It's made up of 27 core competencies.

##### Partnership with Plunket and bathmat initiative

This educates new parents on the importance of supervision.

- Through the partnership, nearly 150,000 bathmats were delivered into NZ homes during the first three years of the project.

##### Constant Active Adult Supervision

In 2017, there were 7 fatal, preventable drownings of under-fives. Supervision is the key message for the safety of young children around water.

- They should always be within your line of sight and within arm's length for the toddlers.
- It takes less than a minute for a child to drown.

##### Life jackets

Water Safety New Zealand will continue to call for lifejackets to be made compulsory for recreational boats under six metres.

- On average there are around 20 recreational boating drownings each year in New Zealand.
- Most occur in vessels under 6 metres and in known cases 73% weren't wearing life jackets.
- The data and research strongly indicates that up to two thirds would unlikely have drowned had they been wearing life jackets
- As the lead agency for the water safety sector WSNZ believes it is time for the government to take this necessary step in order to save lives. Just as the law change

around seat belts dramatically reduced deaths on our roads WSNZ believes similar action is required to bring down our excessive drowning death toll.

- We do acknowledge that there are other components in relation to safer boating, the likes of skipper responsibility, good communications and avoiding alcohol.

### **Pool Fences**

It is our expectation that every pool owner will comply with the requirements under the Building Act 2004.

- Firstly, the pool owner needs to take responsibility for complying with the requirements under the Act.
- Secondly, it is the local authority's duty to make sure pool owners are compliant – and implement three yearly inspections - and to take action against those who fail to comply.
- Retailers are legally required to make sure any purchaser is aware of the requirements under the Act and can be fined for failing to do so. We certainly hope retailers will be taking this responsibility seriously.
- You can regulate responsibility but you can't regulate common sense. People have had paddling pools and backyard pools in New Zealand for generations, they're a part of Kiwi culture. As long as people take responsibility and think about water safety and non-compliance is enforced we don't see that there is a need for further regulation.

### **Water Safety Sector under Pressure**

- Sector resources are stretched beyond their capability. This is a sector which relies on volunteers and is predominantly non-government funded.

### **Rips**

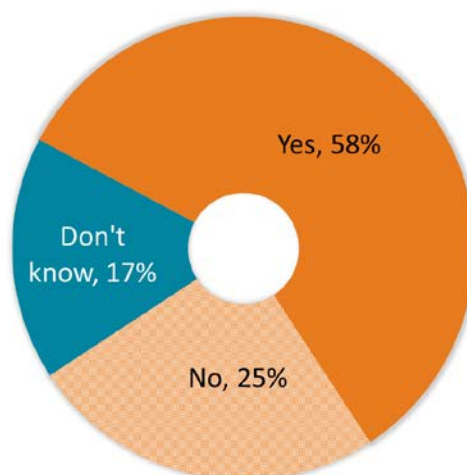
When you are at the beach always swim between the flags. Learn how to spot a rip and know what to do if caught in a rip.

- A rip can be recognised by sand coloured or rippled water running out to sea when the water on either side is generally cleaner.
- If you should get caught in one don't panic and swim against it. You will tire yourself and run out of energy. Stay calm, float on your back until the current weakens. Raise your hand and call for help to indicate you need assistance.
- When the current has subsided, swim parallel to the beach before returning to shore, swimming slowly.
- If you spot someone in a rip at an unpatrolled beach, ensure your own safety and call 111 and ask for police.
- If you ever enter the water to help anyone always take some kind of flotation device with you.

### 3.4 Awareness of recent water safety messages

**58%** said they have seen or heard water safety messages in the past year. This is consistent with previous surveys.

**In the past year have you seen or heard any water safety messages?**



n=1,094  
March 2018

Have seen or heard water safety messages:	2018	2017	2016
Yes	58%	56%	61%
No	25%	29%	24%
Don't know	17%	15%	15%
n =	1,094	1,018	1,000

#### Demographic variations in recall of water safety messages

- Asian respondents were less likely to have seen or heard any water safety messages in the past year at 38% compared to 58% overall.

Have seen or heard water safety messages:	NZ European	NZ Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	2018
Yes	62%	60%	53%	38%	57%	58%
No	22%	24%	25%	48%	29%	25%
Don't know	17%	16%	22%	14%	14%	17%
n =	539	213	85	139	118	1,094

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 average at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 average.

### 3.5 Unprompted recall of water safety messages

Respondents were asked what the main messages were from any water safety messages they remembered from the past year. Their descriptions have been thematically coded, and are summarised below.

The two strongest messages the public remember from the past year are:

- “Swim between the flags, in supervised areas” – mentioned by 23%
- “Wear your life jacket – recalled by 16%

#### What were the main messages?

	2018	2017	2016
Swim between flags/supervised areas/follow life guard instructions	23%	14%	18%
Wear your life jacket/safety vest/when boating	16%	20%	24%
Know your limits/be careful in water/watch out for mates	6%	3%	4%
News report/drowning story or ad (TV, online, radio, newspaper)	5%	4%	3%
Watch out for/supervise children near water	4%	6%	9%
Learn to swim	4%	3%	7%
Water safety/stay safe/water wise	3%	6%	8%
Know the conditions/area - check weather/tides/hidden rocks	3%	3%	2%
Rips (watch for/what to do)	3%	2%	4%
Don't go alone (swim/dive)	2%	1%	2%
Secure/fence pools/swimming areas/gates	1%	2%	2%
No alcohol while swimming/ boating	1%	1%	1%
Stop and think/be aware	1%	1%	2%
Swim/grim reaper/Instagram	1%	1%	NA
Use safety equipment/follow regulations/be prepared/dress appropriately	1%	1%	1%
Other issues: pollution/conservate water/flooding/jelly fish/sharks	2%	1%	<1%
Don't know/can't remember/unclear	2%	2%	1%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>1094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

#### Trends over the past three years

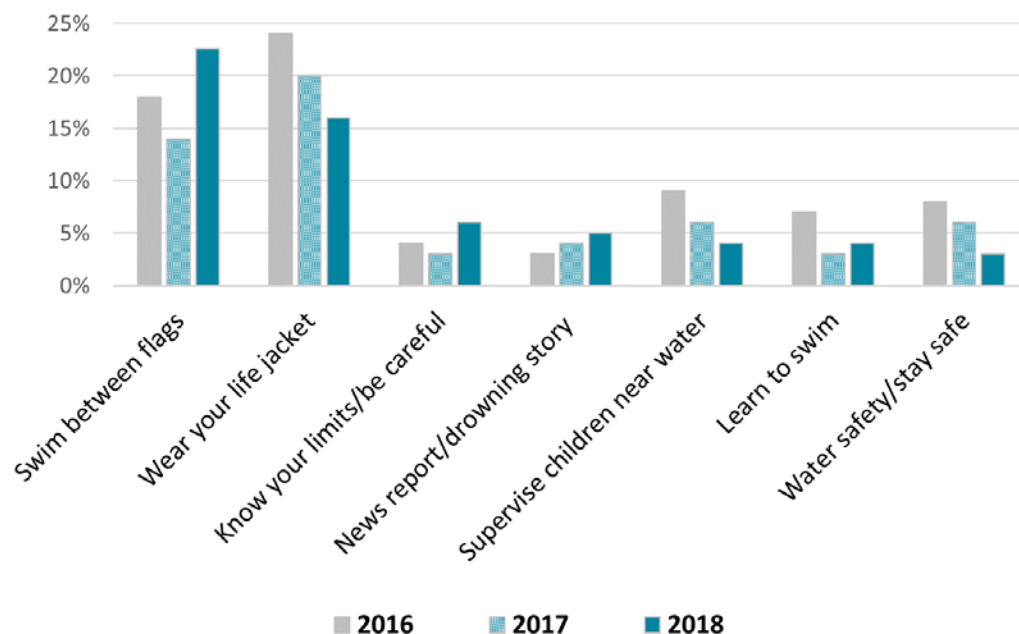
It is encouraging that:

- The proportion who remember seeing or hearing the “Swim between the flags” message has significantly increased to 23% in 2018 - up from 14% in 2017.
- The number who mentioned the “Know your limits” message has increased to 6% in 2018 (from 3% in 2017).

However, recall of several key water safety messages appears to be significantly dropping:

- Recall of the “Wear your life jacket” message appears to be declining. This was mentioned by 16% - significantly lower than 20% in 2017 and 24% in 2016.
- Recall of the message to “Supervise children near water” has also significantly declined, from 9% in 2016 to just 3% in 2018.
- The “Learn to swim” message has dropped from 7% in 2016 to 4% in 2018, and “Stay safe/water wise” has dipped from 8% in 2016 to 3% in 2018.

### Water safety messages recalled from past year...



#### Examples of the varied water safety messages remembered:

- > *A Surf-Lifesaving ad to remind everyone to swim between the flags and a Coastguard series of ads where the ads concluded by advising listeners that it pays to join the Coastguard to ensure safety and care whilst on the water.*
- > *Take care and swim between the flags. Watch young children around water. Wear lifejackets when out on boats.*
- > *Be safe. Carry emergency equipment on a boat and use life jackets. Tell someone where/when you are going.*
- > *On Facebook I saw a video on rips at a local beach.*
- > *Don't swim solo; - swim between the beacons; - wear life-jackets on watercraft; - don't drink /drugs then go swimming; - surf lifesavers are volunteers - donate.*
- > *It was for wearing life jackets on the water when you are on a vessel 6 metres or shorter.*
- > *Stay between the flags. Know your limits.*
- > *Not to put your hand up as you sink. Get on your back. Wear a life jacket if on a boat or watercraft. Learn the basics to survive.*
- > *The Sealord ad encouraging the father of a child to take swimming lessons.*
- > *We need to check for the water quality before going for a swim. When there are lifeguards, we need to listen to their instructions.*
- > *Don't be a hero and go in to the water to save someone if you aren't capable.*
- > *Radio message, learn to swim for the summer for the whole family for water safety.*
- > *Be careful about the water, and where you decide to swim, also try swim with other people rather than by yourself.*
- > *Be cautious, protect and supervise children. Water is powerful and unpredictable and you need to treat it with respect.*
- > *Either from a news report or Surf Lifesaving NZ about being cautious when swimming in the ocean.*
- > *Drowning is silent you should be alert and watch your kids carefully.*
- > *Marine weather app does it every time.*
- > *NOTHING IS FASTER THAN DISASTER.*

## 3.6 Perceptions of risk

### Risky locations

**72%** mentioned the beach in the top 3 locations where they think there is most risk of drowning in New Zealand – up from 65% in 2017. This was followed by rivers (47%), and coastline (45%). Interestingly, respondents were less likely to feel that private homes were one of the top 3 locations for the most risk of drowning this year (35%) compared to the last two years (43% in 2017, and 40% in 2016).

**39%** chose the beach as the location with the highest risk of drowning (their “number one” choice) – significantly higher than last year (34%) but lower than 2016’s 43%.

There continues to be an increase in those seeing rivers as the place with the most risk of drowning, with 11% saying rivers have the highest risk this year compared to 8% in 2016.

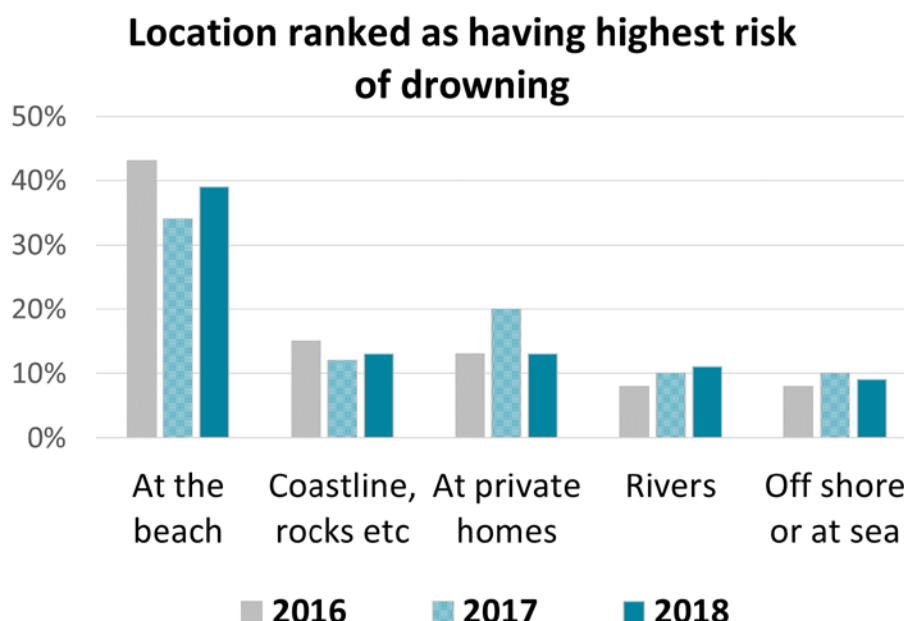
### Where do you think there is the most risk of drowning in New Zealand?

*Respondents ranked their top 3 locations with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest risk of drowning.*

<b>Ranked in Top 3 locations:</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
At the beach	<b>72%</b>	<b>65%</b>	75%
Rivers	<b>47%</b>	49%	<b>43%</b>
Coastline, rocks etc	<b>45%</b>	43%	<b>50%</b>
At private homes (e.g. bath, pond, pool etc.)	<b>35%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Off shore or at sea	<b>32%</b>	33%	30%
Tidal areas and estuaries	<b>26%</b>	25%	26%
Lakes	<b>18%</b>	17%	17%
Harbours	<b>8%</b>	8%	6%
Public swimming pools	<b>7%</b>	9%	5%
Don't know/unsure	<b>3%</b>	3%	2%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

<b>Ranked the <u>highest risk</u> – number 1:</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
At the beach	<b>39%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>43%</b>
Coastline, rocks etc	<b>13%</b>	12%	15%
At private homes (e.g. bath, pond, pool etc.)	<b>13%</b>	<b>20%</b>	13%
Rivers	<b>11%</b>	10%	<b>8%</b>
Off shore or at sea	<b>9%</b>	10%	8%
Tidal areas and estuaries	<b>6%</b>	6%	5%
Lakes	<b>3%</b>	3%	3%
Public swimming pools	<b>1%</b>	1%	1%
Harbours	<b>1%</b>	1%	1%
Don't know/unsure	<b>3%</b>	3%	2%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.



### Demographic variations

There were some significant demographic differences in perceptions of the top three riskiest locations for drowning in New Zealand.

- Groups more likely to include rivers in their top three risky locations were:
  - Men (51%)
  - People living in the Western North Island (58%) and Central North Island (57%)
  - Those in the Rest of the South Island (56%)
- Aucklanders were more likely to include harbours and public swimming pools
- Asian Peoples were less likely to view the beaches (63%), coastline (35%), rivers (34%) and private homes (24%) as risky locations, but were more likely to see offshore (41%), lakes (29%), harbours (15%) and public swimming pools (12%) as one of their top three
- Preschool caregivers were more likely than others to include private homes (50%), but were less likely to identify the coastline in their top three risky locations (36%)

### The risky gender

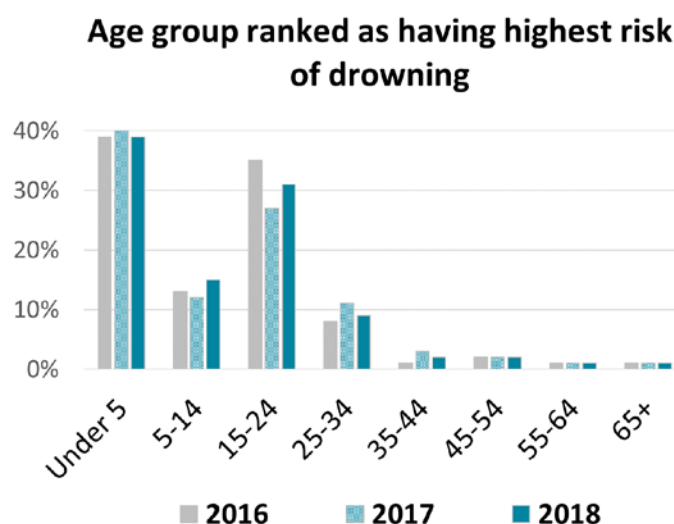
**83%** agreed that men are more at risk of drowning than women – identical to last year.

### Who do you think is at most risk of drowning?

	2018	2017	2016
Males	83%	83%	85%
Females	17%	17%	15%
n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

## Risky age groups

Over the past three surveys, the public have continued to select the under five years age group as the one with the highest risk of drowning (39% selected under-fives in 2018 – down from 44% in 2017), followed by young people aged 15 to 24 years (31% in 2018).



When asked to identify the three age groups they think are at most risk of drowning, the majority thought younger people were more at risk:

- 73% mentioned teenagers and young adults (15 to 24 years) – up from 68% in 2017
- 70% selected pre-schoolers (aged under 5 years) – down from 75% in 2017
- 62% chose children (aged 5 to 14 years), in their top three
- The proportion mentioning the elderly (aged 65+) in their top three riskiest age groups has increased over the past two years to 19% in 2018 – up from 15% in 2016
- The public perception still appears to be that people aged over 35 years have a lower risk of drowning, and this has not changed over the past three years.

## Which three age groups do you think are at most risk of drowning?

*Respondents ranked their top 3 age groups with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest risk of drowning.*

<b>Ranked in Top 3 age groups:</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Under 5 years	70%	75%	72%
5 to 14 years	62%	62%	63%
15 to 24 years	73%	68%	78%
25 to 34 years	39%	37%	38%
35 to 44 years	17%	17%	15%
45 to 54 years	11%	14%	11%
55 to 64 years	10%	9%	8%
65 years or older	19%	18%	15%
<b>Ranked the <u>highest risk</u> – number 1:</b>			
Under 5 years	39%	44%	39%
5 to 14 years	15%	12%	13%
15 to 24 years	31%	27%	35%
25 to 34 years	9%	11%	8%
35 to 44 years	2%	3%	1%
45 to 54 years	2%	2%	2%
55 to 64 years	1%	1%	1%
65 years or older	1%	1%	1%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than 2018 result, while Red indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

### 3.7 Public perceptions of the main factors contributing to drownings

Respondents were asked what they think are the main factors that contribute to more than 100 people dying by drowning each year in New Zealand. This was an unprompted question, and respondents were asked to write their opinion (e.g. a free text answer). The comments have been thematically coded, and a summary is presented on the next page.

**72%** commented on elements of risky behaviour contributing to drownings – over confidence (over-estimating abilities and under-estimating risk), being careless or stupid, not respecting risk, going to dangerous places, going alone, being unprepared, unsupervised etc. A lower proportion of respondents linked drowning to risky behaviour compared to previous years (76% in 2017 and 78% in 2016). The proportion who mentioned not respecting the risks as a factor was higher this year (22% compared to 18% in 2016). Carelessness (14%) was not mentioned as much this year as compared to the previous two years (17% in 2017 and 22% in 2016).

- > *Alcohol consumption which impairs decision making when near or on the water, not wearing lifejackets, ignoring swimming between the flags when at a beach, ignoring warnings of flash floods in rivers and streams and crossing these waterways.*
- > *As far as children are concerned, the parents don't keep a careful enough eye on them. They expect other people to watch out for their children. As far as adults are concerned, alcohol is a factor.*
- > *Because some people don't listen to rules and don't like being told what and where to swim and adults should be with their young ones while swimming or even at home, no matter where they are if people listened there would be less drownings.*
- > *Children unknowingly getting into difficult situations and parents attempting to rescue them.*
- > *I think many people aren't aware on how dangerous the ocean is and will go out quite deep and will get caught in a rip etc. Many of the big waves are in the deep section of the ocean which is where you can be the most vulnerable.*
- > *Struggle to stay afloat because they're tired and aren't able to swim properly, also when they're out at sea and they think they see something they instantly panic making it very unsafe for both them and the people who are surrounding them. Also, I'm pretty sure NZ has quite a lot of inexperienced swimmers.*
- > *I think most people don't know enough about the danger of drowning, even seasoned fishermen go out to sea without life jackets on. Young people often take risks such as diving into rivers without checking depths or rocks under water.*

**42%** mentioned that lack of safety skills and knowledge contribute to drownings – down from 46% in 2016. This included not being able to swim, lack of water safety knowledge, closure of school pools etc. A larger proportion of respondents mentioned lack of swimming skills this year (28%) compared to 24% in 2017.

- > *Don't know enough about water safety, and what to do if you get into a bad situation in water.*
- > *Foreigners to New Zealand shores, not knowing the water. People swimming in their clothes. People not been able to swim. Alcohol then swimming.*
- > *Not being able to swim, swimming lessons being so expensive and not available to everyone, schools not all having swimming pools or ensure pupils have access to swimming lessons, swimming in inappropriate clothing, i.e. swimming in clothes, or not wearing life jackets, or conditions that are not safe.*
- > *New Zealanders are raised around a lot of water and water plays a major part in our Summer/Christmas season where a lot of people are holidaying around water especially or just generally enjoying it, that and not being aware of safety practices in and around water, especially rivers, currents etc. and taking risks around water.*

**Currently more than 100 people die by drowning each year in New Zealand.  
What do you think are the main contributing factors?**

	2018	2017	2016
<b>Total - Risky behaviour:</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>78%</b>
Not respecting risks/can't read conditions <i>Not checking/unfamiliar with conditions/underestimate/ignorant of danger (not aware of rips/tides/rocks/hazards)</i>	22%	18%	21%
Over-confidence <i>Risk taking/over estimating ability/under estimating risk/not knowing limits/ bravado</i>	17%	19%	26%
Carelessness <i>Stupidity/bad decisions/complacency/lack of common sense</i>	14%	17%	22%
Swimming in dangerous places <i>Unpatrolled/outside flags/caught in rips/out of depth/fishing on rocks</i>	14%	12%	15%
Unsupervised <i>Lack of/poor supervision/Children unsupervised/irresponsible parents/neglect</i>	13%	14%	15%
Ignoring water safety rules and warnings <i>Life guards/flags/unsafe practices (over loading boats, unfenced pools)</i>	9%	9%	6%
Alcohol <i>Swimming/on boats</i>	9%	10%	11%
Not wearing life jackets <i>On boats/flotation aids</i>	9%	13%	11%
Being unprepared <i>Lack of safety equipment/unmaintained/inappropriate clothing</i>	5%	5%	6%
Bad weather/waves/conditions/rough seas/ignorance	3%	3%	3%
Trying to rescue others	1%	<1%	1%
Drugs	1%	1%	1%
Going alone/not informing others	1%	1%	2%
<b>Total: Lack of swimming skills and water safety knowledge:</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>46%</b>
Lack of swimming skills <i>Can't swim/not learning to swim/expensive</i>	28%	24%	30%
Lack of water safety knowledge <i>Lack of education/knowledge of dangers &amp; risk/precautions/inexperience</i>	16%	17%	23%
Lack of warning signs/info	2%	1%	1%
Tourists/immigrants <i>Lack of awareness of New Zealand conditions/language barriers</i>	1%	2%	1%
Lack of school swimming/pools in schools/funding	1%	3%	3%
<b>Total: Unpreventable factors:</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Accident/bad luck/boats capsizing/water (in lungs)/medical issues/suicide	2%	3%	3%
NZ lifestyle/environment/lots of coast lines/rivers/high participation in water activities/adventure loving	<1%	1%	1%
Don't know/not answered	6%	8%	3%
(Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately), n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

## 4. Water safety knowledge (unprompted)

Respondents were asked what they think are the main safety tips that people should remember when participating in a variety of water related activities. This was an attempt to measure unprompted awareness of safety knowledge. The comments have been coded by main theme and a summary is shown below. More detail and examples follow.

### The main safety tips people should remember when they...

	2018	2017	2016
<b>Are around water with young children</b>			
<b>Total: Always supervise or stay close to children around water</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>84%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always supervise (watch your children – all the time)</li> </ul>	69%	74%	74%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay close (within arm's length/keep close/stay with them)</li> </ul>	7%	6%	15%
<b>Go out recreational boating</b>			
<b>Total: Wear life jacket, be prepared &amp; have communication device</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>80%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life jackets – wear a life jacket</li> </ul>	68%	70%	77%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check the weather</li> </ul>	7%	7%	6%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be prepared - have emergency/safety equipment</li> </ul>	6%	6%	7%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have communication device - radio/VHF/mobile phone</li> </ul>	4%	3%	4%
<b>Take part in recreational water sports</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear a life jacket</li> </ul>	56%	57%	60%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be safe</li> </ul>	7%	7%	14%
<i>Go with experienced people/not alone/watch out for others</i>			
<b>Visit a beach for swimming or surfing</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swim between flags (if patrolled)/on patrolled beaches</li> </ul>	50%	47%	56%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be careful of/watch: rips/tides/currents</li> </ul>	23%	23%	24%
<i>Also watch rocks/weather/hazards - go out in good/safe conditions</i>			
<b>Visit estuaries or tidal areas - walking, food gathering etc.</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't know (any safety tips for estuaries/tidal areas)</li> </ul>	39%	41%	36%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check/know the tide times</li> </ul>	36%	34%	39%
<i>Watch the tide/water/rips/don't turn your back to the sea</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep safe: Be careful/aware</li> </ul>	8%	15%	16%
<i>Check conditions/slippy/watch where walking/stay on track/read signs</i>			
<b>Visit rivers for recreation</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check for hazards - and act appropriately</li> </ul>	28%	30%	33%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take care/be sensible/don't take unnecessary risks</li> </ul>	12%	17%	13%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have people with you/not alone</li> </ul>	11%	13%	14%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know the area/conditions/know your limits</li> </ul>	8%	10%	7%
<b>Visit the wild coastline or rocks - walking, fishing etc.</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take care: stay on the track/off the edge/rocks</li> </ul>	15%	18%	18%
<i>Read safety notices/obey instructions/ wear safety gear/be prepared</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coastline/waves can be unpredictable</li> </ul>	15%	14%	18%
<i>Watch for rogue waves/water conditions/don't turn your back to the sea</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know the tide times</li> </ul>	16%	14%	17%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

## 4.1 Water safety with young children

Overall, there has been a significant decline in the proportion who mentioned people should remember to always supervise or stay close to children around water from 84% in 2016 to 75% in 2018.

### What are the main safety tips people should remember when they... Are around water with young children?

	2018	2017	2016
<b>Total: Always supervise or stay close to children around water</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>84%</b>
Always supervise (watch your children – all the time)	69%	74%	74%
Stay close (within arm's length/keep close/stay with them)	7%	6%	15%
Be careful (empty baths/close pool gates/stay shallow)	7%	4%	3%
Wear safety vests/life jackets	3%	3%	1%
Teach them water safety measures/to swim	2%	2%	1%
Wear water wings/flotation device	1%	1%	1%
Other safety messages (not necessarily for young children)	0%	<1%	1%
Don't know	16%	16%	13%
(Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately), n=	1094	1,018	1,000

NB: **Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower than 2018 result.

69% said the main safety tip to remember when around water with young children is to always supervise them. This is significantly lower than 74% in 2016 and 2017.

- > *Watch them constantly and be near to them.*
- > *Watch them all the time. In fact, go in with them they can wander off in a second and go in and get swept away.*
- > *Swim with them and don't take your eyes off them for a minute.*
- > *Supervise them closely not back in the camp chair a 100m away.*
- > *Watch your kids, hold their hands.*

The proportion who mentioned “stay close, within arm’s length” has also reduced from 15% in 2016 to 7% in 2018.

- > *Keep children within arm's reach.*
- > *Make sure you are looking at them and not your phone, also make sure that they are in arms reach.*
- > *Never take your eyes off them and keep within arm's length of them.*

Seven percent said caregivers should be careful, and empty baths, close pool gates, stay in shallow water – this has increased from 3% in 2016.

- > *Watch them 100%. Keep in the shallows.*
- > *Keep gates closed.*
- > *Keep an eye on them at all times, empty re-fillable pools when you finish.*
- > *Make sure young children are not near the edge and should hold their hands in slippery and steep surfaces.*
- > *Watch your children, fence off or isolate water.*

## 4.2 Safety at the beach

The main safety tip people recall for visiting a beach is to swim between the flags – mentioned by 50% in 2018 (down from 56% in 2016).

### What are the main safety tips people should remember when they... Visit a beach for swimming or surfing?

	2018	2017	2016
Swim between flags (if patrolled)/on patrolled beaches	50%	47%	56%
Be careful of/watch: rips/tides/currents <i>Also watch rocks/weather/hazards - go out in good/safe conditions</i>	23%	23%	24%
Follow safety signs/life guard instructions	6%	9%	3%
Know your limits - use common sense <i>Don't go out too far - safe depth</i>	6%	6%	10%
Stay near people/group/not alone <i>Watch out for others/your mates</i>	5%	6%	6%
Be prepared/know the beach/know what to do/ <i>Know how to swim/if caught in rip/ask locals advice/aware of surroundings</i>	4%	4%	5%
Wear life jackets/safety gear/swim wear	2%	2%	2%
Supervision/of children	1%	2%	3%
Tell someone where you're going	0%	1%	1%
Don't know	18%	17%	14%
(Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately), n=	1094	1,018	1,000

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

While 50% mentioned you should swim between the flags, just 6% said you should follow safety signs and instructions from life guards.

- > *Swim within flags.*
- > *Swim when lifeguards are out and between flags.*
- > *Swim between the flags. Listen to the lifeguards. Wear appropriate swimwear.*
- > *Listen to lifeguard's advice. Swim between flags.*
- > *Swim between the flags & listen to surf lifesavers, they know the area.*

A quarter (23%) commented on the need to be careful and watch for hazards like rips, tides and strong currents.

- > *Watch the weather. Swim in between the flags and if surfing, watch the weather and the sea for changes and leave the water if it is bad.*
- > *Watch for rips, weather changes.*
- > *Watch for rips, freak waves. Swim between the flags.*
- > *Swim between the flags/where the lifeguards are. Make sure you're aware of any rips or changes in depth.*
- > *Swim between flags or check tides before swimming where there are no flags. Watch out for rips.*
- > *Rips, if patrolled swimming between flags, if get caught in rip go with it.*
- > *Monitor the tides and weather. Don't go alone or at least make sure people know where you are.*
- > *Check weather forecast.*

Again, fewer mentioned other safety issues such as knowing your limits, not going alone, being prepared, telling people where you are going, wearing safe swim wear and minding children.

## 4.3 Recreational water sports safety

**What are the main safety tips people should remember when they...  
Take part in recreational water sports? Canoeing, kayaking, jet skiing,  
wind surfing, etc.**

	2018	2017	2016
Wear a life jacket <i>Safety vest/buoyancy vest/floatation device/sound equipment</i>	56%	57%	60%
Be safe <i>Go with experienced people/not alone/watch out for others</i>	7%	7%	14%
Check water conditions <i>Obtain weather report/watch the tide /pay attention</i>	7%	6%	6%
Know the safety guidelines <i>Follow the rules/listen to your instructor</i>	4%	5%	4%
Be sensible/know your limits	3%	5%	3%
Know/learn to swim <i>Get some training</i>	3%	4%	2%
Avoid drinking alcohol	1%	<1%	<1%
Don't know	26%	27%	22%
(Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately), n=	1094	1,018	1,000

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

The strongest safety message associated with recreational water sports continues to be: wear a life jacket – mentioned by 56%.

- > *Wear your life jacket. Make sure conditions are okay for water sports.*
- > *Wear life jackets. Go the speed i.e. less than 5knots within 200m of the beach.*
- > *Wear life jackets. Careful of high tides.*
- > *Wear life jackets and be sensible.*
- > *Life jackets. Let people know where you are and when you will return.*

Some mentioned the importance of being safe/not alone (7%), checking the weather conditions (7%), and following safety guidelines (4%).

- > *Take the conditions/weather into account.*
- > *Make sure you know what you're doing or have a supervisor with you if it is your first time doing things.*
- > *Listen to all instructions, wear your life-vest, the instructors are your life-line.*
- > *Know what the rules are, follow instructions when given, and always wear your life jacket.*

This year, 3% said people taking part in water sports should be sensible and know their own limits - down from 5% in 2017.

- > *Life jackets. Know your limits.*
- > *Being careful and not being reckless.*
- > *Lifejackets, confident in skill requirement.*

Another 3% mentioned the importance of training first.

- > *Have the correct training and appropriate, properly maintained equipment. Know the latest weather reports*
- > *Gain knowledge before doing.*

## 4.4 Safety visiting the wild coastline or rocks

### What are the main safety tips people should remember when they... Visit the wild coastline or rocks? Walking, fishing etc.

	2018	2017	2016
Know the tide times	16%	14%	17%
Take care: stay on the track/off the edge/rocks	15%	18%	18%
<i>Read safety notices/obey instructions/ wear safety gear/be prepared</i>			
Coastline/waves can be unpredictable	15%	14%	18%
<i>Watch for rogue waves/water conditions/don't turn your back to the sea</i>			
Don't go alone	8%	7%	9%
<i>Take buddy/tell somebody your plans</i>			
Wear sensible footwear/clothing	8%	7%	7%
Watch where you walk/for slippery or loose rocks/maintain footing	8%	7%	5%
Wear a life jacket	6%	7%	6%
Know the weather forecast/day light	6%	5%	4%
Use common sense/don't do stupid things	3%	3%	4%
<i>Don't take unnecessary risk/don't fall in</i>			
Be aware/watch out/watch children	0%	1%	4%
Don't know	31%	32%	27%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

The main safety tips people mentioned for visiting the wild coastline or rocks were to check the tides (16%), take care by staying on the track, reading safety notices and being prepared (15%), and the need to watch out for the waves (15%):

- > *Check tides, local conditions.*
- > *Check tides, winds, swell, life jackets, communication.*
- > *Stay on clearly marked tracks.*
- > *Stay away from the edge and rocks.*
- > *Watch out for huge waves over rocks.*
- > *Watch for rogue waves and watch for the tide change.*

Others mentioned the importance of going with someone (8%), wearing appropriate clothing (8%), watching where you walk (8%), and life jackets (6%).

- > *Never go alone.*
- > *Look out for each other.*
- > *Be prepared, read the conditions, don't fish alone.*
- > *Wear adequate footwear, go with somebody experienced, wear lifejacket.*
- > *Watch where you step so you don't fall in and bump your head on a rock.*

Others commented on checking weather forecasts, using common sense, and being aware – watching for risks.

- > *Know the weather before visiting in coastline or rocks, also avoid restricted dangerous area.*
- > *Only do what you are capable of doing.*
- > *Use extreme caution and be smart. Don't go to dangerous spots. Avoid going during bad weather. Wear a lifejacket.*

## 4.5 Visiting estuaries or tidal areas

### What are the main safety tips people should remember when they... Visit estuaries or tidal areas? Walking, food gathering etc.

	2018	2017	2016
Check/know the tide times <i>Watch the tide/water/rips/don't turn your back to the sea</i>	36%	34%	39%
Keep safe: Be careful/aware <i>Check conditions/slippery/watch where walking/stay on track/read signs</i>	8%	15%	16%
Always go with someone/watch out for each other <i>Tell somebody where you go</i>	7%	7%	8%
Check the weather/weather report/conditions	6%	3%	3%
Wear suitable footwear/clothes/proper/safety gear	2%	3%	2%
Watch the children	1%	1%	2%
Wear life jacket/ safety vest	2%	1%	2%
Be sensible/don't take unnecessary risks <i>Don't be stupid/know your limit/no alcohol or drugs</i>	3%	1%	1%
Don't know	39%	41%	36%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

39% could not think of any safety tips for visiting estuaries or tidal areas – up from 36% in 2016.

Similar to last year, about a third (36%) said the main safety tip they remember is to check the tide times (34% in 2017).

- > *Look at when the tide is going to come in.*
- > *Look for when the high tides are let someone know where you are.*
- > *Know what the times are for the tides. The area should give you some indication of what can be expected ahead.*
- > *Know the tides and which areas become inaccessible.*
- > *Check tides and weather, make sure you're not by yourself, someone there to rescue you/call for help.*

8% mentioned the need to keep safe, and be careful where walking – down from 15% in 2017.

- > *Watch the waves, check underfoot to see the stability of the ground, rocks etc.*
- > *Stay clear of the water line and pay attention to where you're walking.*
- > *Keep safe at all times. Look where you're tramping. Stay with the group, if you are not with the group be sure to be visible where they can see you.*
- > *Don't swim if you cannot, and exercise caution.*

Other aspects mentioned included that it's safer to go with others, check the weather, dress appropriately, always watch children closely, and avoid unnecessary risks.

- > *Correct or appropriate clothing. Know the latest weather reports and local tidal conditions.*
- > *Check tides etc weather and if you're with your family look after them, make sure they're safe.*
- > *Always watch children.*
- > *Know your surroundings observe for rips and don't dive beyond your means.*
- > *Do not go too far in if you cannot swim.*

## 4.6 Recreational boating safety

**79%** overall made mention of recreational boaters needing life jackets, preparation, or communication devices. This is significantly higher than 74% in the 2017 survey.

### What are the main safety tips people should remember when they...

#### Go out recreational boating?

	2018	2017	2016
<b>Total: Wear life jacket, be prepared &amp; have communication device</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>74%</b>	80%
Life jackets – wear a life jacket	<b>68%</b>	70%	<b>77%</b>
Be prepared - have emergency/safety equipment <i>Location beacon/flares/GPS/radar/safe, well-maintained boat/safety training</i>	<b>6%</b>	6%	7%
Have communication device - radio/VHF/mobile phone	<b>4%</b>	3%	4%
Check the weather	<b>7%</b>	7%	6%
Be cautious/follow the rules <i>Watch your speed/don't be stupid/experienced skipper/watch out /know your limits</i>	<b>5%</b>	5%	4%
Advise people of plans <i>Let someone know/submit trip report/don't go alone</i>	<b>3%</b>	5%	<b>6%</b>
Know the tides/water conditions	<b>3%</b>	3%	2%
No alcohol/drugs	<b>2%</b>	2%	2%
Don't overload boat	<b>1%</b>	<1%	1%
Don't know	<b>19%</b>	19%	15%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

68% commented on the importance of wearing a life jacket for recreational boating – down from 77% in 2016.

- > *Wear your lifejacket and ensure all the distress equipment is working.*
- > *Wear life jackets have a waterproof cell phone on you.*
- > *Wear life jackets and carry emergency equipment.*
- > *Wear life jacket report to someone else if you are going out and returning.*
- > *Wear floatation vests and DO NOT DRINK.*
- > *Wear a lifejacket and tell someone where you are planning to go. Know how to contact the coast guard. Stay away from rocks.*

The percentage of people who mentioned other safety aspects like having emergency safety equipment, communication devices, checking the weather, being cautious, and advising others of plans, was similar to last year (and all less than 8%).

- > *Have proper safety gear, carry communication device, someone knows where you are.*
- > *Life jacket, flares, radio, report departure and arrival times.*
- > *Always wear a lifejacket, check weather reports and take ample communication devices.*
- > *Tell someone, don't go alone, check weather conditions, wear a life jacket and have flares on board.*
- > *Safety clothing and letting people who where they are going.*
- > *Be prepared/weather conditions/hazards/learn how to swim/appropriate clothing.*

## 4.7 Visiting rivers safely

### What are the main safety tips people should remember when they... Visit rivers for recreation? Swimming, fishing, tramping, walking etc.

	2018	2017	2016
Check for hazards - water depth/currents/under water - and act appropriately <i>Safe crossings/swimming</i>	28%	30%	33%
Take care/be sensible/don't take unnecessary risks <i>Stick to paths/stay within boundaries/read the signs/observe rules/guidelines</i>	12%	17%	13%
Have people with you/not alone <i>Take a buddy/swim with others/supervision/tell someone/communicate/cell phone</i>	11%	13%	14%
Know the area/conditions/know your limits <i>Learn river craft skills/swimming</i>	8%	10%	7%
Check the weather	8%	5%	6%
Be well equipped - have the right gear <i>Proper foot wear/clothing/experience/life jackets/safety gear</i>	6%	8%	8%
Watch children	1%	1%	2%
Don't know	31%	33%	29%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

28% mentioned when people visit rivers they should check for hazards like the water depth, currents, underwater obstacles, and take appropriate care - down from 33% in 2016.

- > *Watch the rocks under the water and the speed of the water flow.*
- > *Swim where it is safe, always check the depth before crossing or swimming in.*
- > *Stay away from rough or deep patches.*
- > *Shallow water, slippery rocks, fallen trees.*
- > *NEVER dive in without personal knowledge of underwater depth and diving cap between rocks and the top.*
- > *No alcohol, don't swim in clothing, don't dive into murky water.*

12% commented on the need to take care, and avoid risks - down from 17% in 2017.

- > *Follow signs, pay attention.*
- > *Common sense really. If the river runs too fast or cannot see the bottom stay out.*
- > *Check out the situation, don't take risks.*

11% said it is important to have people with you, and to tell people where you are going.

- > *Time schedule left with family member, GPS, radio, medicine box, safety equipment.*
- > *Swim with a crowd and don't take risks crossing rivers.*
- > *Stay safe, let family know where you are at, and when you will be home.*

8% mentioned you should know the area, and also check the weather – (up from 5% in 2017).

- > *Take notice of any weather warnings for flash floods.*
- > *Watch out for bad weather that can cause rivers to rise rapidly.*
- > *Know the area before entering, at least research it.*
- > *Staying within your limits.*

## 4.8 Is the message getting through to the appropriate groups?

This section explores the main safety tips identified by the public in terms of:

- The types of activities that they have undertaken in the past 12 months in New Zealand
- Specific related activities, and their risk profile for that activity
- First-hand experience of a serious situation in the water

In the tables below:

- **Bold red** indicates a result that is statistically significantly **below** the result for the NZ Public
- **Bold blue** indicates the result that is statistically significantly **above** the result for the NZ Public

### Recall of main safety tips for recreational boating

**69%** of boaties (people who have been sailing or power boating in the last 12 months) mentioned wearing a life jacket - almost identical to 68% of the New Zealand public.

		"Wear a life jacket"	"Check the weather"	"Be prepared"	N=
	<b>NZ Public</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1,094</b>
<b>Risk profile</b>	<b>Boaties</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>140</b>
	No Risk	<b>85%</b>	10%	0%	<b>40</b>
	Low	75%	12%	<b>15%</b>	<b>52</b>
	Med	<b>44%</b>	6%	3%	<b>36</b>
	High	58%	0%	8%	<b>12</b>
	All Risk	62%	8%	10%	<b>100</b>
<b>Water related activities</b>	Swimming	69%	8%	6%	<b>662</b>
	Wading /paddling in water	<b>78%</b>	8%	7%	<b>540</b>
	Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, stand up paddleboarding	68%	8%	7%	<b>203</b>
	Surfing, boogie boarding, wind surfing	60%	4%	2%	<b>129</b>
	Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	64%	8%	5%	<b>129</b>
	Accidentally fallen in water	<b>53%</b>	8%	7%	<b>87</b>
	Sailing	62%	10%	6%	<b>52</b>
	Power boating, jet skiing	<b>70%</b>	9%	8%	<b>119</b>
	Fishing, food gathering	73%	9%	7%	<b>269</b>
	Looked after a pre-schooler	76%	6%	6%	<b>314</b>
	None of these	68%	6%	9%	<b>213</b>
<b>First-hand</b>	Yes - experienced serious situation	<b>71%</b>	9%	8%	<b>372</b>
	No experience	69%	5%	6%	<b>687</b>
	Don't know	<b>29%</b>	9%	0%	<b>35</b>

Those more likely to have mentioned "wearing life jackets" than the general public (69%) were:

- Boaties classified as "No Risk" 85%
- People who had been wading or paddling 78%
- Those who had been power boating or jet skiing 70%
- People with first-hand experience of a serious water situation 71%

Those who had accidentally fallen in the water were less likely to mention life jackets (53%).

## Recall of main safety tips for being around water with young children

**78%** of pre-school caregivers said it's important to "always supervise" young children around water – significantly higher than 69% amongst the general public.

Only 7% (of both pre-school caregivers and the general public) mentioned the importance of "staying within arm's length".

		"Always supervise"	"Stay within arm's length"	N=
	<b>NZ Public</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>1,094</b>
<b>Risk profile</b>	<b>Pre-school caregivers</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>314</b>
	No Risk	<b>78%</b>	7%	<b>153</b>
	Low	<b>81%</b>	5%	<b>96</b>
	Med	69%	12%	<b>42</b>
	High	74%	0%	<b>23</b>
	All Risk	<b>77%</b>	6%	<b>161</b>
<b>Water related activities</b>	Swimming	73%	8%	<b>662</b>
	Wading /paddling in water	<b>77%</b>	10%	<b>540</b>
	Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, stand up paddleboarding	73%	8%	<b>203</b>
	Surfing, boogie boarding, wind surfing	64%	8%	<b>129</b>
	Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	64%	9%	<b>129</b>
	Accidentally fallen in water	62%	5%	<b>87</b>
	Sailing	60%	6%	<b>52</b>
	Power boating, jet skiing	76%	3%	<b>119</b>
	Fishing, food gathering	<b>76%</b>	6%	<b>269</b>
	Looked after a pre-schooler	<b>78%</b>	7%	<b>314</b>
	None of these	68%	4%	<b>213</b>
<b>First-hand</b>	Yes - experienced serious situation	<b>74%</b>	9%	<b>372</b>
	No experience	68%	6%	<b>687</b>
	Don't know	<b>31%</b>	9%	<b>35</b>

Groups who were more likely than the general public to mention the importance of "always supervising children" around water were:

- Pre-school caregivers (people who indicated they had looked after a pre-schooler within the past 12 months) **78%**
- Waders/paddlers **77%**
- Fishers/food gatherers **76%**
- Those who had experienced a serious situation **74%**

## Recall of main safety tips for taking part in recreational water sports, (canoeing, kayaking, jet skiing, wind surfing etc.)

**56%** of water sports participants (and the general public) said that it's a good safety measure to "wear a life jacket" when participating in water sports, and 9% mentioned the importance of being safe and participating with a group.

		"Wear a life jacket"	"Be safe, go with experienced people/a group"	N=
	<b>NZ Public</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>1,094</b>
<b>Risk profile</b>	<b>Water sports participants</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>322</b>
	No Risk	56%	9%	<b>88</b>
	Low	59%	7%	<b>87</b>
	Med	57%	10%	<b>69</b>
	High	53%	9%	<b>78</b>
	All Risk	56%	9%	<b>234</b>
<b>Water related activities</b>	Swimming	58%	8%	<b>662</b>
	Wading /paddling in water	<b>65%</b>	9%	<b>540</b>
	Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, stand up paddleboarding	61%	8%	<b>203</b>
	Surfing, boogie boarding, wind surfing	51%	7%	<b>129</b>
	Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	52%	9%	<b>129</b>
	Accidentally fallen in water	<b>43%</b>	7%	<b>87</b>
	Sailing	54%	4%	<b>52</b>
	Power boating, jet skiing	60%	7%	<b>119</b>
	Fishing, food gathering	59%	7%	<b>269</b>
	Looked after a pre-schooler	<b>62%</b>	8%	<b>314</b>
	None of these	52%	7%	<b>213</b>
<b>First-hand</b>	Yes - experienced serious situation	60%	6%	<b>372</b>
	No experience	56%	7%	<b>687</b>
	Don't know	<b>26%</b>	11%	<b>35</b>

The importance of wearing life jackets for water sports was more likely to be mentioned by

- Those who have been wading or paddling in the water 65%
- Respondents who looked after a pre-school child 62%

Those who had accidentally fallen in the water were less likely to mention life jackets (43%).

## Recall of main safety tips for visiting a beach for swimming or surfing

Half the public (50%) said that it's a good idea to swim between the flags when visiting a beach for swimming or surfing, and a quarter (23%) mentioned being careful and watching out for rips, tides and currents.

People who have been swimming in the past 12 months were more likely than the general public to mention watching out for rips (28%), and a similar proportion to the public (51%) commented on the importance of swimming between the flags.

	Swim between the flags	Be careful, watch for rips, tides, currents	N=
<b>NZ Public</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>1,094</b>
<b>Risk profile</b>			
Swimmers	51%	28%	496
No Risk	58%	29%	187
Low	47%	30%	254
Med	41%	11%	37
High	39%	22%	18
All Risk	46%	28%	309
<b>Water related activities</b>			
Swimming	52%	27%	662
Wading /paddling in water	58%	29%	540
Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, stand up paddleboarding	48%	25%	203
Surfing, boogie boarding, wind surfing	44%	24%	129
Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	47%	26%	129
Accidentally fallen in water	41%	26%	87
Sailing	42%	25%	52
Power boating, jet skiing	54%	26%	119
Fishing, food gathering	46%	32%	269
Looked after a pre-schooler	53%	27%	314
None of these	49%	15%	213
<b>First-hand</b>			
Yes - experienced serious situation	55%	25%	372
No experience	49%	22%	687
Don't know	23%	23%	35

Fishers were significantly more likely to have mentioned the need to be careful and watch for rips (32%). Also:

- Swimmers with a 'no risk' profile were more likely to mention swim between the flags (58%) and watch for rips (29%)
- Waders/paddlers were also more likely to mention both messages (58% and 29%, respectively)

## Recall of main safety tips for visiting estuaries or tidal areas

**36%** of the general public mentioned that it's important to check or know the tide times when visiting estuaries or tidal areas, and 8% commented on the importance of keeping safe - being aware, careful and checking conditions – a significant drop from 15% in 2017.

Fishers were more likely (45%) than the general public to be aware of the importance of tide times.

		Check/know tide times	Keep safe. Be careful/check conditions	N=
	<b>NZ Public</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>1,094</b>
<b>Risk profile</b>	<b>Fishers</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>269</b>
	No Risk	50%	7%	14
	Low	43%	10%	86
	Med	49%	6%	126
	High	33%	9%	43
	All Risk	44%	8%	255
<b>Water related activities</b>	Swimming	35%	8%	662
	Wading /paddling in water	44%	5%	540
	Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, stand up paddleboarding	38%	6%	203
	Surfing, boogie boarding, wind surfing	36%	6%	129
	Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	40%	6%	129
	Accidentally fallen in water	28%	2%	87
	Sailing	31%	10%	52
	Power boating, jet skiing	49%	3%	119
	Fishing, food gathering	45%	8%	269
	Looked after a pre-schooler	36%	7%	314
	None of these	35%	9%	213
<b>First-hand</b>	Yes - experienced serious situation	42%	9%	372
	No experience	33%	8%	687
	Don't know	20%	0%	35

Additional groups who were also more likely to mention the importance of knowing tide-times at estuaries or tidal areas were:

- Waders/paddlers 44%
- Those who have been out power boating or jet skiing 49%
- People with experience of a serious situation in the water 42%

## Recall of main safety tips for visiting rivers for recreation

**28%** of the public suggested checking for hazards when visiting rivers for recreation, while 12% said people should take care and be sensible, and 11% that it's good to take a buddy.

	NZ Public	Check for hazards 28%	Take care, be sensible 12%	Take a buddy 11%	N= 1,094
Risk profile	<b>Fishers</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>269</b>
	No Risk	29%	7%	7%	<b>14</b>
	Low	36%	15%	9%	<b>86</b>
	Med	35%	10%	15%	<b>126</b>
	High	35%	19%	7%	<b>43</b>
	All Risk	35%	13%	12%	<b>255</b>
Risk profile	<b>Swimmers</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>496</b>
	No Risk	<b>35%</b>	9%	16%	<b>187</b>
	Low	32%	12%	11%	<b>254</b>
	Med	14%	11%	11%	<b>37</b>
	High	17%	11%	11%	<b>18</b>
	All Risk	29%	12%	11%	<b>309</b>
Water related activities	Swimming	31%	11%	13%	<b>662</b>
	Wading /paddling in water	<b>36%</b>	11%	13%	<b>540</b>
	Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, stand up paddleboarding	33%	8%	13%	<b>203</b>
	Surfing, boogie boarding, wind surfing	34%	7%	9%	<b>129</b>
	Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	32%	12%	11%	<b>129</b>
	Accidentally fallen in water	<b>17%</b>	14%	8%	<b>87</b>
	Sailing	25%	13%	13%	<b>52</b>
	Power boating, jet skiing	34%	11%	12%	<b>119</b>
	Fishing, food gathering	<b>35%</b>	13%	12%	<b>269</b>
	Looked after a pre-schooler	32%	13%	13%	<b>314</b>
	None of these	<b>20%</b>	12%	8%	<b>213</b>
First-hand	Yes - experienced serious situation	30%	12%	13%	<b>372</b>
	No experience	28%	12%	9%	<b>687</b>
	Don't know	<b>11%</b>	3%	17%	<b>35</b>

The groups more likely than the general public to mention the importance of checking for hazards when visiting rivers were:

- Fishers 35%
- 'No risk' swimmers 35%
- Waders/paddlers 36%

Respondents who had accidentally fallen in the water, or not done any water-based activities in the past 12 months, were less likely to have mentioned checking for hazards – 17% and 20%, respectively.

## Recall of main safety tips for visiting the wild coastline or rocks

**16%** of the general public mentioned the importance of knowing the tide times when visiting the wild coastline or rocks. Similar proportions commented on waves being unpredictable (15%), and the need to take care and stay on the track (15%).

		Know the tide times	Coastline waves can be unpredictable	Take care, stay on track/ off rocks	N=
	<b>NZ Public</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>1,094</b>
<b>Risk profile</b>	<b>Fishers</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>269</b>
	No Risk	14%	29%	14%	<b>14</b>
	Low	17%	<b>23%</b>	9%	<b>86</b>
	Med	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>	13%	<b>126</b>
	High	12%	16%	19%	<b>43</b>
	All Risk	<b>20%</b>	<b>22%</b>	13%	<b>255</b>
<b>Risk profile</b>	<b>Swimmers</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>496</b>
	No Risk	21%	20%	12%	<b>187</b>
	Low	17%	15%	18%	<b>254</b>
	Med	14%	8%	11%	<b>37</b>
	High	11%	0%	28%	<b>18</b>
	All Risk	16%	13%	17%	<b>309</b>
<b>Water related activities</b>	Swimming	17%	15%	16%	<b>662</b>
	Wading /paddling in water	20%	<b>20%</b>	16%	<b>540</b>
	Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, stand up paddleboarding	16%	16%	16%	<b>203</b>
	Surfing, boogie boarding, wind surfing	15%	12%	15%	<b>129</b>
	Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	17%	12%	13%	<b>129</b>
	Accidentally fallen in water	11%	13%	11%	<b>87</b>
	Sailing	8%	15%	19%	<b>52</b>
	Power boating, jet skiing	18%	<b>22%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>119</b>
	Fishing, food gathering	20%	<b>23%</b>	13%	<b>269</b>
	Looked after a pre-schooler	20%	15%	14%	<b>314</b>
	None of these	15%	12%	15%	<b>213</b>
<b>First-hand</b>	Yes - experienced serious situation	19%	17%	17%	<b>372</b>
	No experience	15%	14%	15%	<b>687</b>
	Don't know	9%	11%	6%	<b>35</b>

Fishers were more likely than others to recognise the unpredictability of coastline waves (23%), while more medium risk fishers commented on the importance of knowing tide times (25%).

Also:

- Waders were more likely to comment that waves can be unpredictable (20%).
- Power boaters were more likely to mention the importance of staying on the track (23%), and the coastline waves (22%), compared to the general public.

## 5. Attitudes

### 5.1 Public opinion towards water safety issues

The public were asked to indicate their opinions on a range of water safety issues. The results were quite positive in that three out of four respondents at least agreed with every statement, and they have been very consistent between 2016 and 2018. (Please note these questions were not asked in the 2017 survey.)

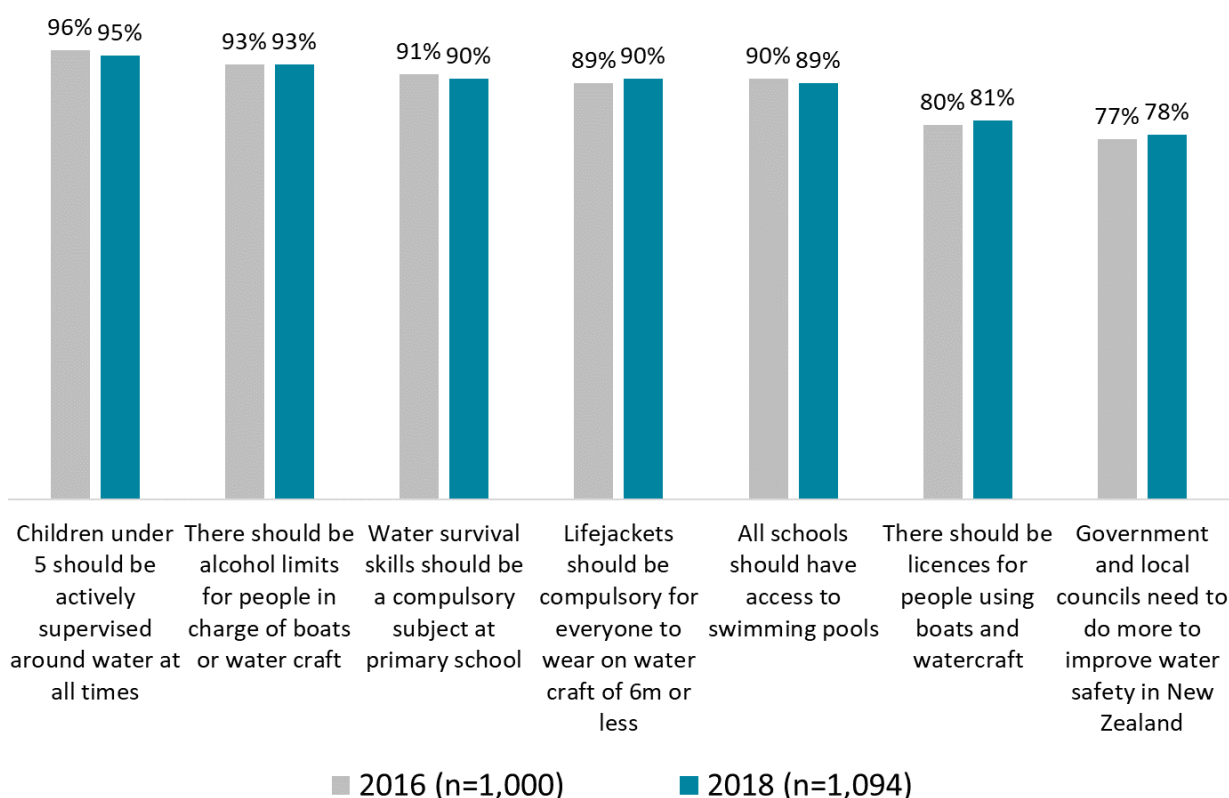
**82%** of the respondents “strongly agreed” that children under 5 years of age should be actively supervised around water at all times, and 69% “strongly agreed” there should be alcohol limits for people in charge of boats or water craft.

#### How much do you agree or disagree?

	2018					TOTAL AGREE		TOTAL DISAGREE	
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	2018	2016	2018	2016
Children under 5 years of age should be actively supervised around water at all times	1%	0%	3%	14%	82%	95%	96%	2%	3%
There should be alcohol limits for people in charge of boats or water craft, just like for motor vehicles)	1%	2%	5%	24%	69%	93%	93%	3%	2%
Water survival skills should be a compulsory subject at primary school	2%	1%	7%	32%	59%	90%	91%	3%	5%
Lifejackets should be compulsory for everyone to wear on water craft of 6m or less	2%	2%	6%	26%	64%	90%	89%	4%	3%
All schools should have access to swimming pools	2%	1%	8%	36%	54%	89%	90%	3%	1%
There should be licences for people using boats and watercraft	2%	5%	13%	34%	47%	81%	80%	6%	6%
Government and local councils need to do more to improve water safety in New Zealand	1%	2%	19%	38%	40%	78%	77%	3%	4%
<b>True n=</b>						<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,000</b>

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower. Note these questions were not asked in the 2107 survey.

## Public who agreed that...



## Demographic variations

Compared to the 2018 results for the New Zealand public on the chart above, there were several demographic variations in responses to the water safety issues statements.

**Boaties** were less likely than the national average to agree that:

- Children under 5 should be actively supervised around water (90% compared to 95% overall)
- Lifejackets should be compulsory for everyone on small craft (84%)
- There should be licenses for using boats and watercraft (70%)
- There should be alcohol limits for people in charge of boats or water craft (87%)

People of **Asian** descent were less likely to agree that:

- Water survival skills should be a compulsory subject at primary school (77%)
- Children under 5 should be actively supervised around water (86%)
- All schools should have access to swimming pools (71%)

**Males** were less likely to agree that:

- Water survival skills should be a compulsory subject at primary school (86%)
- There should be licenses for people using boats and water craft (76%). Females were more likely to agree (86%).
- There should be alcohol limits for people in charge of boats or water craft (89%). Again, females were more likely to agree with this statement (96%).

**New Zealand Māori** and **Pacific Peoples** were more likely to agree that the government and local councils need to improve water safety in New Zealand – 84% and 89%, respectively.

## 5.2 Public attitudes towards unsafe practices

The public were asked to give reasons for why they think some people don't learn to swim, wear life jackets, have the required safety equipment on their boat, check water conditions are safe, and carry two forms of communication when boating.

These questions were unprompted and asked for comments (free-text answers). The answers given were thematically coded, and a summary of the main factors is shown below.

In many answers respondents mentioned more than one theme, and these have been coded separately. More details and examples of the comments follow.

### Main reasons why the New Zealand public think some people don't...

	2018	2017	2016
<b>Learn to swim:</b>			
Afraid of water <i>Lack confidence/don't like the water/swimming/bad experience</i>	25%	29%	27%
It's too expensive <i>Can't afford swimming lessons/lack of funding</i>	24%	25%	25%
Lack of opportunity <i>No access to pools/lack of facilities/resources</i>	20%	15%	29%
<b>Wear a life jacket:</b>			
Ignorance/don't need one/over-confident/underestimate conditions <i>Nothing will happen to me/invincible/unnecessary</i>	28%	38%	38%
<b>Have the required safety equipment on board their boat:</b>			
Too expensive <i>Lack of money/cost/can't afford it</i>	33%	35%	38%
Stupidity/lazy <i>Careless/arrogant/irresponsible</i>	32%	32%	31%
<b>Check the water conditions are safe:</b>			
Too stupid <i>Too lazy/careless/forget</i>	45%	43%	40%
Unaware of risk/lack knowledge <i>Lack education/experience/impatient - just want to get out</i>	21%	22%	33%
Overconfident/casual <i>Take things for granted/they know best/think weather will not change</i>	18%	26%	19%
<b>Carry two different types of communication while boating:</b>			
Unprepared – laziness/stupidity/forget/she'll be right attitude	29%	36%	N/A
Too expensive	24%	22%	N/A
<b>Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

N/A: Not asked in 2016 survey

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## 5.3 Barriers to learning to swim

The public were asked why they think some people don't learn to swim.

### Why do you think some people don't...

Learn to swim?	2018	2017	2016
Afraid of water <i>Lack confidence/don't like the water/swimming/bad experience</i>	25%	29%	27%
It's too expensive <i>Can't afford swimming lessons/lack of funding</i>	24%	25%	25%
Lack of opportunity <i>No access to pools/lack of facilities/resources</i>	20%	15%	29%
Too lazy/too hard/no time <i>Can't be bothered/too old to learn/not interested</i>	18%	19%	20%
Lack of safety awareness: Don't think they need to learn to swim <i>Not important/not a priority for parents</i>	12%	12%	14%
Embarrassed/cultural reasons/modesty <i>Self-conscious in swimming suit/scared of teasing/physical disability/health issues</i>	7%	7%	5%
No school pools <i>Not taught as a child at school</i>	6%	11%	9%
Don't know/unsure	9%	10%	6%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

In this survey, one out of four commented that many people don't learn to swim because they are afraid of the water.

- > *They think they can't or they're afraid they won't be able to.*
- > *They can often times be too scared or intimidated by the water. Maybe bad experiences from their past.*
- > *They are afraid of water, no resources to do so. School doesn't encourage that much.*
- > *They are afraid of their head going under the water. They are afraid that they will drown. They do not have parents or older siblings to teach them.*
- > *Some people don't have access to swimming pools or they live far from the sea. Some people might just be too afraid of the sea or being in water.*

Once again, a quarter said cost is a barrier to learning to swim.

- > *Pools can be expensive and not all schools have access. Some people just can't - I've had lessons as a child and adult and still can't without a float.*
- > *Swim classes are expensive and parents think that if kids can stay afloat in water, that's swimming.*

Lack of time, and lack of opportunity (e.g. fewer school pools) also stop people learning to swim.

- > *No opportunity, hard to find time, cost of lessons, nobody who they know to do it with.*
- > *Lack of amenities. Lack of time, opportunities. Embarrassment.*
- > *For myself, didn't have the opportunity at school then as an adult, didn't have the motivation.*

Others mentioned a lack of safety awareness – people not thinking it is important.

- > *There isn't enough importance given to water safety.*

Several raised cultural, modesty and embarrassment issues.

- > *It's not part of their culture or upbringing. They can't afford to, parents are scared of the water so they don't encourage their children to learn.*

## 5.4 Barriers to wearing life jackets

The public were asked why they think some people don't wear a life jacket.

### Why do you think some people don't...

<b>Wear a life jacket?</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Ignorance/don't need one/over-confident/underestimate conditions - <i>Nothing will happen to me/invincible/unnecessary</i>	<b>28%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>38%</b>
Too much hassle <i>Lazy/can't be bothered</i>	<b>17%</b>	16%	16%
Stupidity <i>Carelessness/complacent/arrogance</i>	<b>16%</b>	14%	16%
Life jackets are expensive <i>No money/can't afford one</i>	<b>14%</b>	12%	14%
Uncomfortable/restrictive <i>Annoying/bulky/hot</i>	<b>11%</b>	13%	13%
Uncool/unfashionable <i>Look silly/cultural influences</i>	<b>11%</b>	11%	13%
Not on board/don't have one <i>Not available /not enough life jackets</i>	<b>10%</b>	11%	11%
Too macho/bravado	<b>5%</b>	6%	5%
Don't know/unsure	<b>7%</b>	8%	5%
<b>Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

28% of the public surveyed thought ignorance – being over confident and underestimating the conditions – was the reason why some people don't wear life jackets.

- > *Thinking they are indispensable. They are just careless. Big headed. Blockheads.*
- > *Think they are invincible, or that they can swim. Don't think about boat capsizing and hitting head.*

Around one in six said life jackets are just too much hassle.

- > *Don't have the equipment on hand at the time, laziness/nonchalant or the 'she'll be right' attitude.*

Many mentioned that stupidity and carelessness are key reasons.

- > *Because they're DUMB or can't afford one but still. They shouldn't go out if they don't have one.*

Some said life jackets are expensive.

- > *The cost plus I assume it can also be more of a hindrance rather than a help. Plus people tend to believe nothing will go wrong.*

Others mentioned life jackets can be viewed as uncool, uncomfortable, and restrictive.

- > *Some people think life jackets look stupid and are too proud to wear one. Some people think they are uncomfortable. Some people believe they don't need one as they are good swimmers.*
- > *Most of the people I know are 'too cool' to wear a life jacket, think they're tough/safe.*
- > *Fear of looking silly, don't think bad things can happen to them, peer pressure.*
- > *Bulky, reputation - don't want to look like a 'pussy'/ scaredy-cat, people don't think anything will happen to them.*

Unfortunately, sometimes life jackets are not available, or there are not enough.

- > *Not offered to them when they hop on to a boat, etc or too big to fit one provided, esp. islanders...*

## 5.5 Barriers to having the required safety equipment on boats

The public were asked why they think some people don't have the required safety equipment on board their boat.

### Why do you think some people don't...

Have the required safety equipment on board their boat?	2018	2017	2016
Too expensive <i>Lack of money/cost/can't afford it</i>	<b>33%</b>	35%	<b>38%</b>
Stupidity/lazy <i>Careless/arrogant/irresponsible</i>	<b>32%</b>	32%	31%
No awareness <i>Ignorance/lack of knowledge/experience</i>	<b>16%</b>	16%	<b>26%</b>
Overconfident <i>Casual/think they don't need it/nothing will happen to them</i>	<b>13%</b>	<b>21%</b>	16%
No requirement/needs to be mandatory/all the time	<b>3%</b>	2%	2%
Troublesome/inaccessible/ignore in a hurry	<b>7%</b>	--	--
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

A third (33%) commented that they think some people don't have the required safety equipment on their boats because it's too expensive.

- > *Too expensive to afford as well as believing that they don't need it.*
- > *Think it's too expensive even though it is lifesaving.*
- > *They can't afford it? They aren't aware of what equipment they should have?*
- > *Some people can't afford the safety equipment.*
- > *Possibly due to costs involved purchasing them.*
- > *Maybe might've not been able to afford all required equipment at the time, might not know there's equipment onboard/that is required, might not know how to operate equipment, outdated stuff.*

Another third (32%) put it down to stupidity, laziness and careless attitudes.

- > *Simply lazy or irresponsible, thinking 'it won't happen to me' about situations that could require said equipment.*
- > *Irresponsible. If you can afford a boat and the trailer and car to tow it, you should have to buy the equipment when you purchase the boat.*

A sixth referred to lack of knowledge and inexperience as contributors.

- > *Unaware of safety equipment required.*
- > *Not being prepared enough or not having training for them to be aware of what is required in regard to safety equipment.*

Some commented on overconfidence as a factor.

- > *Think they are invincible--never happen to me--.*

Several mentioned a lack of legal requirements.

- > *There should be a compulsory check list in all water craft.*
- > *Ignorant of recommendations (should be law).*

## 5.6 Barriers to checking water conditions are safe

The public were asked why they think some people don't check the water conditions are safe.

### Why do you think some people don't...

Check the water conditions are safe?	2018	2017	2016
Too stupid <i>Too lazy/careless/forget</i>	45%	43%	40%
Unaware of risk/lack knowledge <i>Lack education/experience/impatient - just want to get out</i>	21%	22%	33%
Overconfident/casual <i>Take things for granted/they know best/think weather will not change</i>	18%	26%	19%
No access to info/updates/internet connection	7%	1%	1%
Don't know/unsure	15%	13%	11%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	1,094	1,018	1,000

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

Almost half (45%) said they think some people are too stupid, lazy or careless to check that water conditions are safe.

- > *Because they are lazy and don't know how or just want to get straight to swimming.*
- > *Again, not being responsible and bad attitude.*
- > *Laziness, careless "won't happen to me" attitude, complacency.*
- > *Lazy or don't know how or determined to go out whatever the conditions.*
- > *They are stupid.*

A fifth (21%) mentioned some people don't check water conditions due to a lack of knowledge, education and experience, or they are just impatient to get out.

- > *Might misjudge the conditions, might not check regularly.*
- > *Lazy or not aware that they have to check water conditions before swimming.*
- > *Just want to get straight in, no internet access, impatience, lack of knowledge of what a 'safe water condition' might look like.*
- > *Ignorance, over-confidence.*
- > *Don't think about it or under informed about what they should do.*

Another fifth (18%) commented that over-confidence can be an issue.

- > *Possibly they look out the window, weather/water surface looks okay and suppose it will stay that way.*
- > *Just assume it will be okay, or think they are experienced.*
- > *Don't think enough about their safety in the water, or think their abilities in the water are good enough to not need to.*
- > *Because people don't really take into consideration that it isn't really important and that the weather won't change things when actually it can.*
- > *'I've done this many times before - why do I need to worry'.*

A few raised communication issues.

- > *Don't know where to look.*

## 5.7 Barriers to carrying two different types of communication

The public were asked why they think some people don't carry two different types of communication while boating.

### Why do you think some people don't...

Carry two different types of communication while boating?	2018	2017
Unprepared – <i>laziness/stupidity/forget/she'll be right attitude</i>	29%	36%
Too expensive	24%	22%
Lack of knowledge - <i>uneducated/inexperience</i>	19%	14%
Think one is enough - <i>don't go far</i>	15%	16%
We do this - <i>you should for safety/in case one fails</i>	4%	3%
Not practical	0%	2%
Don't know/unsure	14%	20%
Based on the public's comments, multiple themes coded separately, n=	1,094	1,018

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

More than a quarter (29%) said people don't carry two forms of communication while boating because they're unprepared, due to laziness, stupidity, or they just don't think about it.

- > *They never believe they will get into trouble.*
- > *They feel that nothing will happen.*
- > *Most people including myself would be too complacent about having two different forms of communication.*
- > *Can't be bothered and as with all other questions - don't believe it will happen to them.*
- > *They think there will never be an accident or a situation where a safety kit is required.*
- > *Think they know what is best for them, or just too lazy to be bothered.*
- > *People sometimes think that nothing bad is going to happen when they are out at sea.*

A quarter (24%) commented that cost might be an issue:

- > *Don't want the expense.*
- > *It's expensive to buy the required types of communication. Some people can't be bothered.*
- > *Costs and too relaxed. We live in cell phone environment and we think that is enough.*

Lack of knowledge and safety education were also mentioned.

- > *Can't be bothered (not expensive). Too careless/casual/think they know all about safety.*
- > *Unaware that they should have more than 1 type of communication.*
- > *They don't understand the risks, think they'll be alright.*
- > *Unaware of the safety rule, cost, may not have access to two different forms of communication, she'll be right mentality.*

## 6. Behaviour and risks

This section measures the proportion of New Zealanders who have engaged in water related activities (including potentially risky behaviours) in the last 12 months in New Zealand.

The 2018 survey showed the level of participation in activities has been fairly consistent over the past three years, with three-fifths (58%) swimming, and half (50%) wading or paddling in water.

However, over the last 12 months fewer:

- Looked after a pre-school child (28% - down from 33% in 2016)
- Went sailing (5% - down from 7% in 2017)

Significantly more people reported that they:

- Participated in power boating or jet skiing (12% - up from 9% in 2017)
- Accidentally fell in the water (7% - up from 4% in 2016)

### Which of these activities have you done in the last 12 months in New Zealand?

	2018	2017	2016
Swimming	58%	58%	57%
Wading/paddling in water	50%	49%	48%
Looked after a preschool child	28%	32%	33%
Fishing, or food gathering	25%	27%	24%
Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddle-boarding	17%	17%	16%
Power boating, or jet skiing	12%	9%	10%
Surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing	11%	10%	10%
Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	11%	11%	9%
Accidentally fallen in water	7%	5%	4%
Sailing	5%	7%	5%
Have not done any of these in last 12 months	21%	19%	21%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

### Demographic variations

Compared to the 2018 national results above, Aucklanders were more likely to undertake several activities:

- Swimming 64%
- Canoeing, kayaking, rowing or SUP 23%
- Surfing, boogie boarding or wind surfing 18%
- Sailing 8%

Women were more likely than average to have:

- Been wading/paddling 58%
- Looked after a preschool child 34%

Men were more likely to undertake:

- Fishing or food gathering 32%
- Power boating or jet skiing 15%
- Sailing 6%

There were several differences in the various water-based activities undertaken by the different ethnicities. These are shown in the table below.

Which of these activities have you done in the last 12 months in New Zealand?	NZ European	NZ Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other ethnicities	2018
Swimming	58%	67%	68%	47%	47%	58%
Wading/paddling in water	57%	53%	34%	23%	35%	50%
Looked after a preschool child	26%	39%	34%	25%	15%	28%
Fishing, or food gathering	24%	39%	24%	20%	15%	25%
Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddleboarding	18%	18%	20%	16%	11%	17%
Power boating, or jet skiing	15%	10%	6%	6%	4%	12%
Surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing	11%	13%	9%	13%	4%	11%
Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)	9%	18%	12%	10%	6%	11%
Accidentally fallen in water	7%	11%	6%	6%	2%	7%
Sailing	5%	3%	5%	7%	2%	5%
Have not done any of these in last 12 months	22%	15%	15%	21%	33%	21%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>1094</b>

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

New Zealand Māori were more likely than the national average to have over the last 12 months participated in:

- Swimming 67%
- Care of a pre-schooler 39%
- Fishing or food gathering 39%
- Underwater activities 18%
- Accidental falls 11%

New Zealand Europeans were more likely than average to have been wading or paddling (57%), while Pacific Peoples (34%), Asians (23%) and other ethnicities (35%) were less likely.

Asians were also less likely to have been swimming (47%) or power boating (6%).

People of other ethnicities were more likely than others to have not done any of these activities in the last 12 months (33%), including swimming (47%), care of a pre-schooler (15%), and fishing (15%).

## 6.1 Swimming, and wading/paddling

**58%** had been swimming and **50%** had been wading or paddling in the past 12 months.

- The most common places people went swimming were a public swimming pool (55%), unpatrolled beach (49%), patrolled beach (45%) or private swimming pool (40%). There was an increase in those swimming at unpatrolled beaches compared to 2016.
- Two-thirds (64%) had been paddling at an unpatrolled beach or coastline, 41% at a patrolled beach (a significant increase from the past two years), and 36% at a river or stream.

### Where have you been swimming, or wading/ paddling in New Zealand in the last 12 months?

	Swimming			Wading/paddling		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Public swimming pool	55%	56%	55%	18%	21%	20%
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	49%	44%	39%	64%	67%	62%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	45%	45%	40%	41%	35%	33%
Private swimming pool	40%	36%	35%	15%	16%	14%
River or stream	25%	29%	21%	36%	34%	36%
Lake or pond	21%	25%	20%	24%	25%	22%
Off-shore or at sea	13%	12%	10%	8%	11%	8%
Harbour/Estuary	11%	12%	8%	14%	16%	15%
School swimming pool	11%	13%	11%	7%	6%	6%
Paddling pool	8%	7%	6%	19%	18%	16%
Somewhere else	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>499</b>

### Patrolled beaches

There has been a steady increase in the proportion who said they “*always swim between the flags*” over the past two years (from 40% in 2016 to 50% in 2018). In contrast, 24% of waders “*always waded between the flags*”, fewer “*usually waded between flags*” (from 48% in 2017 to 34% in 2018), and an increased number only “*sometimes*” do (from 29% in 2017 to 39% in 2018).

### At a patrolled beach (e.g. with life guards and a flag-marked safe swimming area) ...

How often do you:	Swim between the flags			Wade/paddle (or go in the water) between the flags		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Always	50%	48%	40%	24%	20%	25%
Usually	32%	38%	44%	34%	48%	38%
Sometimes	15%	12%	15%	39%	29%	35%
Never	3%	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>166</b>

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## Reasons why the patrolled areas are not used

Respondents who indicated they had swum or waded/paddled at a patrolled New Zealand beach or coastline in the past 12 months, but had not always been between the flags were asked why.

### What are the reasons you don't swim between the flags?

	2018	2017	2016
Flagged area too narrow and crowded <i>Too many people/feels more dangerous/inexperienced boogie boarders</i>	43%	45%	54%
Life guards gone/no flags/not aware	26%	19%	22%
I have skills/confident swimmer <i>I feel sure it's safe/better elsewhere/fun</i>	22%	18%	29%
I don't go deep/stay close beside patrolled area	4%	9%	9%
Sometimes drift from flags	8%	7%	8%
Not convenient/for access/parking	0%	6%	2%
Don't know/not answered	6%	6%	1%
<b>Total – don't always swim between flags at patrolled beaches</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>139</b>

Just under half (43%) of the swimmers said they don't always swim in the flagged area as it is too crowded, and some say they feel unsafe there.

- > *Crowded beaches - too many people in very small flagged sections.*
- > *At the other end of the beach. Too many rocks in that area.*
- > *Too crowded, not swimming too far out. Always aware of water conditions.*
- > *It's a tiny area and you'd have to be constantly checking yourself to make sure you were still in that zone, plus everybody else ignores the boundaries.*
- > *Because I go to a beach where there are no flags, or they are way too crowded to the point where it's dangerous.*

A quarter (26%) mentioned that sometimes there were no flags, or the life guards had gone.

- > *Go at times when the beach is not being patrolled.*
- > *No flags at the beach I'm swimming at.*

Just over fifth (22%) who don't use the patrolled area are confident swimmers.

- > *When I know the beach and the conditions are good.*
- > *I'm water wise and know limits.*
- > *Too many people and I am a confident swimmer.*
- > *Often busy and I am a competent swimmer.*
- > *Live at the other end of the beach. Safe beach. I am a surf lifeguard.*
- > *I know where to look for the currents and rip tides. It also depends on the water conditions and how well I know the beach. If it is not local I will always swim between flags.*

Some said they don't go in deep, or stay near the patrolled area.

- > *We are only a few metres from them.*
- > *Crowded area, I'd swim close by instead.*

Others sometimes drift away from the flags.

- > *Sometimes when in the water the tides drift me slightly away to just outside the area of the flags.*

### What are the reasons you don't wade/paddle between the flags?

	2018	2017	2016
Walking along beach/shallow water <i>I feel safe/don't need supervision/have dog</i>	46%	51%	52%
Too busy/crowded <i>Hazardous boogie boards/others have more need</i>	22%	25%	27%
Life guards gone/no flags/unpatrolled	13%	13%	17%
Not convenient/too far away/not where I want to be	13%	8%	10%
Drift outside flags	4%	3%	2%
Don't know	9%	10%	5%
<b>Total - don't always wade between flags at patrolled beaches</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>124</b>

Less than half (46%) of those who had waded or paddled at a patrolled beach outside the flagged areas said they were just walking along the beach or staying in shallow areas and felt safe.

- > *When paddling I like to walk the whole length of the beach and feel I am in no danger.*
- > *There's not much danger walking in ankle-knee deep water.*
- > *Only if I'm going for a walk on the beach and just getting my toes wet and it's flat as a pancake out there.*

Around a fifth mentioned the flagged area was often too crowded.

- > *If just wading I don't think it is always necessary. Often too crowded.*
- > *I'd prefer to go for a longer stroll than just between the flags as they are only a short distance and usually there are a lot of children in those shallow bits.*
- > *Depends on how busy the beach is. If the beach is too busy and it is heavily populated between the flags, I feel more comfortable wading up to knee depth outside that area.*

Some commented they are walking in unpatrolled areas.

- > *Tahunanui is a safe beach. Not always serviced by lifeguards.*
- > *On an unpatrolled beach.*
- > *No flags at that beach.*
- > *Areas with no flags.*

Others said the flagged areas were inconvenient.

- > *It depends where the car is parked as to where on the beach we enter the water for a paddle.*
- > *Access to the beach is outside the area covered by flags. Some beaches have estuaries or deltas that lead to the beach.*

## Swimming at unpatrolled beaches

**49%** of those who had been swimming in the past 12 months swam at an unpatrolled beach:

- Almost half (45%) said they always follow the advice of safety notices, while around a third always check the water for strong currents and rips (38%), and never get in without safety checks (37%)
- It's concerning that 78% reported they never (or sometimes) ask for advice on where it's safe to swim. Additionally, a third (32%) don't check for rips or strong currents often, and 28% said they never (or sometimes) perform safety checks before entering the water.
- Two-fifths (40%) sometimes (or more often) swim alone
- 70% don't always check the weather report
- A fifth (21%) at least sometimes enter the water under the influence of alcohol

### When swimming at an unpatrolled beach (no life guard) ...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Read and follow the advice of any safety notices	<b>2018</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>45%</b>
	2017	6%	18%	32%	45%
	2016	<b>2%</b>	18%	39%	41%
Check the water for strong currents and rips	<b>2018</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>38%</b>
	2017	13%	19%	33%	35%
	2016	11%	21%	31%	38%
Check the weather report before you go to the beach	<b>2018</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>30%</b>
	2017	10%	27%	39%	24%
	2016	10%	32%	38%	<b>20%</b>
Get in without any safety checks	<b>2018</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>8%</b>
	2017	33%	37%	22%	8%
	2016	37%	36%	22%	5%
Ask someone for advice on where it's safe to swim	<b>2018</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>4%</b>
	2017	34%	44%	16%	7%
	2016	32%	47%	17%	4%
Swim alone, i.e. with no-one else around	<b>2018</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1%</b>
	2017	54%	35%	9%	2%
	2016	57%	37%	<b>5%</b>	1%
Enter the water while under the influence of alcohol	<b>2018</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	2017	78%	18%	2%	1%
	2016	79%	18%	3%	0%

**2018 True n=334**

**2017 True n=294**

**2016 True n=241**

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

The results are similar to those of the past two surveys. There has been an increase in those who always check the weather report (up 10% from 2016 to 30% in 2018).

## Swimming at rivers

**25%** of those who had been swimming in the past 12 months swam in a river or stream:

- There appears to have been an improvement in the proportion who always check the weather report before going to the river – up from 16% in 2016 to 28% in 2018
- However, just 12% always ask for advice on where it is safe to swim, and the proportion who never ask for advice has increased from 14% in 2016 to 23% in 2018
- A third (32%) have swum at rivers while under the influence of alcohol
- Less than half always check the water for hidden obstacles (43%) or check for strong currents and depth (44%)
- Two-fifths (40%) have swum alone at least some of the time

### When swimming in a river...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Read and follow the advice of any safety notices	<b>2018</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>41%</b>
	2017	4%	23%	34%	39%
	2016	<b>2%</b>	18%	30%	50%
Check the water for hidden obstacles	<b>2018</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>43%</b>
	2017	9%	22%	36%	33%
	2016	5%	18%	38%	39%
Check the water for strong currents and the depth	<b>2018</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>44%</b>
	2017	8%	20%	<b>35%</b>	37%
	2016	7%	19%	<b>37%</b>	37%
Check the weather report before you go to the river	<b>2018</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>28%</b>
	2017	12%	29%	36%	24%
	2016	8%	34%	<b>42%</b>	<b>16%</b>
Ask someone for advice on where it's safe to swim	<b>2018</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>12%</b>
	2017	17%	41%	32%	9%
	2016	<b>14%</b>	48%	30%	8%
Get in without any safety checks	<b>2018</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>6%</b>
	2017	38%	36%	18%	8%
	2016	39%	44%	14%	3%
Enter the water while under the influence of alcohol	<b>2018</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>
	2017	72%	21%	5%	3%
	2016	77%	18%	3%	2%
Swim alone, with no-one else around	<b>2018</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>1%</b>
	2017	54%	33%	9%	4%
	2016	59%	37%	<b>2%</b>	2%

**2018 True n=182**

**2017 True n=192**

**2016 True n=139**

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

## 6.2 Supervising preschool children

**28%** had looked after a preschool child in the last 12 months – down significantly from the previous two years (32% in 2017 and 33% in 2016):

- 48% supervised them at a public swimming pool
- Another 48% supervised preschool children in the bath – down from 58% in 2017
- 31% supervised preschool children at unpatrolled beaches or private swimming pools
- 30% supervised at patrolled beaches – up from 23% two years ago
- When looking after a preschool child near water - 72% said they always stay within arm's reach of the child, while 86% said they never leave the child unsupervised
- 66% reported they never get distracted (by a phone etc.)

### Where have you looked after a preschool child in New Zealand in the last 12 months?

	2018	2017	2016
Public swimming pool	48%	47%	41%
In the bath/bathing	48%	58%	45%
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	31%	33%	30%
Private swimming pool	31%	33%	28%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	30%	28%	23%
River or stream	20%	16%	16%
Lake or pond	17%	14%	13%
Harbour/Estuary	7%	7%	6%
Off-shore or at sea	5%	4%	2%
None of the above	12%	11%	17%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>332</b>

### When looking after a preschool child near water (bath, swimming pool, beach, lake, stream or river) ...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Stay within arm's reach of the child?	2018	1%	7%	20%	72%
	2017	1%	5%	23%	71%
	2016	1%	5%	25%	69%
Leave them unsupervised (even briefly)?	2018	86%	10%	2%	2%
	2017	86%	11%	1%	2%
	2016	87%	11%	1%	1%
Get distracted e.g. by a phone, reading, other people etc.?	2018	66%	31%	3%	0%
	2017	67%	31%	1%	1%
	2016	67%	31%	1%	1%

**2018 True n=314**

**2017 True n=332**

**2016 True n=332**

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## 6.3 Fishing (or food gathering)

**25%** had been fishing (or food gathering) in the last 12 months:

- 49% were at an unpatrolled beach or coastline and 36% were off shore or at sea
- There is an increase in those fishing at lakes or ponds (up 6% from last year) as well as at patrolled beaches or coastline (up 6% from 2016)
- The number who always go out fishing alone has dropped to 59% from 72% in 2016
- Three-fifths (59%) always check the weather forecast before heading out
- A fifth (18%) have been fishing under the influence of alcohol themselves (or others)

### Where have you been fishing (or food gathering) in New Zealand in the last 12 months?

	2018	2017	2016
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	49%	48%	47%
Off-shore or at sea	36%	40%	35%
River or stream	26%	25%	19%
Harbour/Estuary	24%	29%	25%
Lake or pond	16%	10%	13%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	11%	10%	5%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>244</b>

### When you go out fishing (or food gathering) ...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Check the weather report and conditions?	2018	3%	12%	26%	59%
	2017	5%	13%	23%	59%
	2016	2%	14%	29%	55%
Carry at least one waterproof way of communicating? (E.g. Mobile phone, VHF radio, flares, locator beacons.)	2018	12%	16%	25%	47%
	2017	10%	12%	25%	53%
Carry two different types of communication?	2018	35%	30%	18%	17%
	2017	37%	25%	15%	23%
Go out just by yourself?	2018	59%	28%	11%	2%
	2017	62%	27%	9%	3%
	2016	72%	19%	8%	1%
Are you (or others) under the influence of alcohol?	2018	82%	15%	2%	1%
	2017	79%	17%	3%	1%
Do you wear a life jacket when you are:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
In a boat	2018	7%	13%	19%	61%
	2017	8%	17%	15%	60%
	2016	11%	10%	22%	56%
In the water	2018	39%	28%	14%	19%
	2017	40%	22%	12%	26%
	2016	38%	26%	15%	21%
Standing on rocks by the water	2018	48%	30%	14%	9%
	2017	49%	24%	14%	13%
	2016	52%	24%	14%	10%

**2018 True n=269**

**2017 True n=290**

**2016 True n=244**

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## 6.4 Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddleboarding

**17%** had been canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddleboarding in the last 12 months.

- 48% had been at an unpatrolled beach or coastline (up from 34% in 2016), 34% at a lake or pond, and 28% at a river
- 58% said they always wear a lifejacket – down from 69% in 2017
- Half (51%) never go out alone
- Those who never check the weather forecast dropped by half since 2016 to 5%
- Three out of ten (29%) never carry at least one waterproof type of communication

### **Where have you been canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddleboarding in New Zealand in the last 12 months?**

	2018	2017	2016
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	48%	44%	34%
Lake or pond	34%	29%	31%
River	28%	33%	22%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	22%	20%	20%
Harbour/Estuary	20%	21%	21%
Off-shore or at sea	14%	16%	13%
True n=	203	198	176

### **When canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddleboarding...**

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Wear a life jacket	2018	7%	12%	23%	58%
	2017	8%	11%	12%	69%
	2016	6%	12%	24%	57%
Check the weather report and conditions	2018	5%	22%	33%	40%
	2017	7%	20%	32%	41%
	2016	10%	21%	32%	36%
Carry at least one waterproof way of communicating?	2018	29%	19%	25%	26%
	2017	28%	26%	24%	22%
Carry two different types of communication?	2018	55%	26%	14%	6%
	2017	60%	20%	14%	6%
Go out just by yourself	2018	51%	35%	10%	3%
	2017	52%	28%	15%	4%
	2016	52%	29%	14%	4%
Are you (or others) under the influence of alcohol?	2018	81%	11%	6%	2%
	2017	88%	7%	3%	2%

**2018 True n=203**

**2017 True n=198**

**2016 True n=176**

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

## 6.5 Surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing

**11%** had been surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing in the last 12 months:

- 61% were at patrolled beaches, and 52% at unpatrolled beaches
- The proportion who surfed, boogie boarded or wind surfed at rivers has gone up by 10% since 2016 to 16% in 2018

This years' responses have seen some positive changes for those undertaking these activities:

- Although 61% never wear a life jacket, this is an improvement from 77% in 2016
- There appears to be a steady increase in those who always check the weather forecast before going out

However, there has been an increase in the proportion who sometimes go out just by themselves from 31% in 2017 to 43% in 2018. Plus, a decrease in the number who never go out alone from 56% in 2016 to 38% in 2018.

### **Where have you been surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing in New Zealand in the last 12 months?**

	2018	2017	2016
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	61%	58%	63%
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	52%	63%	61%
River	16%	10%	6%
Lake or pond	7%	9%	5%
Harbour/Estuary	6%	5%	4%
Off-shore or at sea	4%	7%	2%
True n=	129	113	105

### **When surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing...**

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Check the weather report and conditions	2018	7%	25%	30%	38%
	2017	10%	22%	33%	35%
	2016	14%	25%	32%	30%
Wear a life jacket	2018	61%	16%	13%	10%
	2017	64%	14%	7%	15%
	2016	77%	12%	7%	4%
Go out just by yourself	2018	38%	43%	17%	2%
	2017	51%	31%	14%	4%
	2016	56%	31%	12%	1%

**2018 True n=129**

**2017 True n=113**

**2016 True n=105**

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

## 6.6 Power boating, or jet skiing

**12%** had been power boating, or jet skiing, in the last 12 months:

- 45% of power boaters were off-shore, 37% on a lake, and 36% at an unpatrolled beach
- The proportion “never” in charge of power boats has dropped by nearly a half to 25% compared to the past two years
- 60% said they always wear a life jacket while power boating, 83% that there are always enough life jackets for everyone, and 67% always have all required safety equipment
- Nobody said that they (or others) always went out power boating under the influence of alcohol – down from 6% last year
- 47% of jet skiers were at a lake/pond, 38% at an unpatrolled beach, and 34% at a patrolled beach
- 71% of jet skiers said they always wear a life jacket
- 51% always check the weather report before going out jet skiing – up from 23% in 2016

**Where have you been power boating, or jet skiing in New Zealand in the last 12 months?**

	Power boating			Jet skiing		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Off-shore or at sea	45%	44%	43%	23%	41%	18%
Lake or pond	37%	44%	32%	47%	43%	43%
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	36%	38%	25%	38%	43%	27%
Harbour/Estuary	31%	36%	35%	26%	32%	23%
River	18%	17%	22%	17%	46%	24%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	8%	13%	5%	34%	32%	22%
True n=	102	81	98	45	41	31

### Jet skiing

**When you go out jet skiing...**

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Wear a life jacket	2018	2%	12%	15%	71%
	2017	5%	0%	17%	77%
	2016	0%	13%	9%	78%
Check the weather report and conditions	2018	1%	22%	25%	51%
	2017	11%	13%	33%	44%
	2016	8%	11%	58%	23%
Go out just by yourself	2018	50%	20%	25%	5%
	2017	45%	21%	18%	15%
	2016	45%	22%	29%	4%

**2018 True n=45** Caution: small sample sizes.

**2017 True n=41**

**2016 True n=31**

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## Power boating

### When you go out power boating...

How often:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Are there enough life jackets for everyone	<b>2018</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>83%</b>
	2017	3%	3%	11%	83%
	2016	0%	5%	6%	89%
Do you wear a life jacket	<b>2018</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>60%</b>
	2017	6%	8%	13%	73%
	2016	5%	14%	20%	60%
Are all people on board wearing life jackets	<b>2018</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>61%</b>
	2017	10%	4%	20%	67%
	2016	5%	18%	28%	49%
Do you have the required safety equipment on board	<b>2018</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>67%</b>
	2017	3%	7%	15%	75%
	2016	1%	8%	20%	71%
Are you in charge of the craft	<b>2018</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>
	2017	<b>43%</b>	35%	11%	10%
	2016	<b>41%</b>	40%	11%	9%
Are there too many people on the boat	<b>2018</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>
	2017	82%	7%	6%	5%
	2016	89%	6%	3%	1%
Do you go out just by yourself	<b>2018</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	2017	75%	20%	3%	3%
	2016	80%	16%	4%	1%
Are you (or others) under the influence of alcohol	<b>2018</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	2017	75%	12%	7%	<b>6%</b>
	2016	73%	19%	6%	2%

**2018 True n=102**

**2017 True n=81**

**2016 True n=98**

### When you are in charge (of power boat) ...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Check the weather or marine forecasts before you go out in the boat	<b>2018</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>64%</b>
	2017	0%	7%	27%	65%
	2016	1%	11%	21%	67%
Carry at least one waterproof way of communicating? (E.g. Mobile phone, VHF radio, flares, locator beacons.)	<b>2018</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>68%</b>
	2017	4%	16%	15%	65%
Check a water or boating safety code, website or app?	<b>2018</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>12%</b>
	2017	22%	37%	17%	24%
	2016	23%	38%	25%	15%
Carry two different types of communication?	<b>2018</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>39%</b>
	2017	13%	20%	21%	46%

**2018 True n=73**

**2017 True n=49**

**2016 True n=58**

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

## 6.7 Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.)

**11%** had done underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.) in the last 12 months – identical to last year:

- 53% had done these underwater activities at an unpatrolled beach or coastline, while 34% were off-shore or at sea
- There was an increase in the proportion who were at a patrolled beach or coastline (from 11% in 2016 to 26% in 2018)
- 51% said they always check the weather forecast and conditions
- 29% sometimes (or more frequently) go out by themselves
- 42% sometimes (or more frequently) separate from their buddy

### Where have you done underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.) in New Zealand in the last 12 months?

	2018	2017	2016
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	53%	50%	53%
Off-shore or at sea	34%	39%	29%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	26%	31%	11%
Harbour/Estuary	13%	8%	8%
Lake or pond	13%	9%	13%
River	12%	10%	9%
True n=	129	124	98

### When participating in underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.) ...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Check the weather report and conditions	2018	5%	9%	35%	51%
	2017	5%	17%	29%	49%
	2016	6%	10%	37%	46%
Go out just by yourself	2018	71%	18%	10%	1%
	2017	72%	15%	10%	4%
	2016	78%	13%	9%	0%
Separate from your buddy	2018	58%	29%	13%	1%
	2017	55%	36%	4%	4%
	2016	58%	33%	9%	0%

**2018 True n=129**

**2017 True n=124**

**2016 True n=98**

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

## 6.8 Sailing

**5%** (52 respondents) had been sailing in the last 12 months – please note the smaller group responding to these questions.

Sailing in **small boats** (6m or less):

- Around half had been sailing at unpatrolled beaches (45%) or off-shore, and a third at rivers (34%) – up from 9% in 2017, or in harbour/estuary areas (33%)
- Half said all people on board always wear life jackets (49%), while two-thirds (36%) said there are not always enough life jackets for everyone
- 58% said they always have the required safety equipment on board (up from 33% in the 2016 survey), and half (51%) go out by themselves at times
- Just under half are at times under the influence of alcohol (44%)
- When in charge of a small boat, three-fifths always check the weather or marine forecasts before they go out (60%), and 43% check a water or boating safety code, website or app (up from 4% in the 2016 survey)
- When in charge, three-fifths (60%) always carry at least one waterproof way of communicating, and 32% always carry two different types of communication

Sailing in **large boats**:

- Nearly three-fifths were off shore or at sea (58%) and two-fifths in harbours/estuaries (40%)
- A third said all people on board always wear life jackets (32%). Only 3% said that people never wear life jackets – down from 19% in 2016
- Under half (43%) reported there are not always enough life jackets for everyone
- Three-fifths (65%) said they always have the required safety equipment on board, while three out of five noted there are never too many people on board (62%)
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) said at times they (or others) are under the influence of alcohol
- When in charge of a large boat, only a third always check the weather or marine forecasts before they go out (31%) – down significantly from 74% last year, while a fifth always check a water or boating safety code, website or app (16%)
- When in charge, two-fifths carry at least one waterproof way of communicating (41%), and 33% carry two different types of communication – down from 73% last year

**Where have you been sailing in New Zealand in the last 12 months, and in what type of boat?**

	Small Boat (6m or less)			Large boat (more than 6m)		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	45%	56%	39%	32%	40%	29%
Off-shore or at sea	45%	41%	38%	58%	69%	64%
River	34%	9%	14%	5%	14%	7%
Harbour/Estuary	33%	39%	37%	40%	51%	53%
Lake or pond	32%	30%	50%	29%	21%	8%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	27%	19%	23%	31%	17%	9%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>30</b>

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.

**Caution: small sample sizes.**

## Small boats

### When sailing in a small boat (6m or less) ...

How often:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Are there enough life jackets for everyone	<b>2018</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>64%</b>
	2017	0%	9%	17%	74%
	2016	6%	12%	19%	63%
Do you wear a life jacket	<b>2018</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>42%</b>
	2017	0%	15%	22%	63%
	2016	13%	7%	20%	61%
Are all people on board wearing life jackets	<b>2018</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>49%</b>
	2017	4%	15%	28%	53%
	2016	7%	12%	31%	50%
Do you have the required safety equipment on board	<b>2018</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>58%</b>
	2017	0%	12%	28%	60%
	2016	11%	13%	43%	<b>33%</b>
Are you in charge of the craft	<b>2018</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>5%</b>
	2017	17%	40%	26%	17%
	2016	21%	41%	18%	19%
Are there too many people on the boat	<b>2018</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>6%</b>
	2017	65%	16%	9%	10%
	2016	62%	16%	16%	7%
Do you go out just by yourself	<b>2018</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>6%</b>
	2017	47%	27%	20%	6%
	2016	57%	19%	21%	3%
Are you (or others) under the influence of alcohol	<b>2018</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>4%</b>
	2017	64%	14%	12%	10%
	2016	66%	11%	19%	3%

**2018 True n=34** Caution: small sample sizes.

**2017 True n=31**

**2016 True n=29**

### When you are in charge (of small boat) ...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Check the weather or marine forecasts before you go out in the boat	<b>2018</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>60%</b>
	2017	1%	20%	22%	56%
	2016	4%	13%	35%	48%
Carry at least one waterproof way of communicating? (E.g. Mobile phone, VHF radio, flares, locator beacons.)	<b>2018</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>60%</b>
	2017	13%	16%	21%	49%
Check a water or boating safety code, website or app?	<b>2018</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>43%</b>
	2017	15%	36%	9%	40%
	2016	16%	47%	34%	<b>4%</b>
Carry two different types of communication?	<b>2018</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>32%</b>
	2017	13%	28%	24%	35%

**2018 True n=27** Caution: small sample sizes.

**2017 True n=24**

**2016 True n=23**

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

## Large boats

### When sailing in a large boat (more than 6m) ...

How often:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Are there enough life jackets for everyone	<b>2018</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>57%</b>
	2017	0%	14%	13%	74%
	2016	0%	15%	13%	72%
Do you wear a life jacket	<b>2018</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>33%</b>
	2017	7%	27%	20%	47%
	2016	21%	29%	24%	26%
Are all people on board wearing life jackets	<b>2018</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>32%</b>
	2017	6%	25%	30%	39%
	2016	<b>19%</b>	24%	33%	24%
Do you have the required safety equipment on board	<b>2018</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>65%</b>
	2017	2%	9%	25%	63%
	2016	5%	6%	18%	71%
Are you in charge of the craft	<b>2018</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>7%</b>
	2017	40%	23%	15%	22%
	2016	45%	41%	11%	3%
Are there too many people on the boat	<b>2018</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>11%</b>
	2017	71%	19%	<b>3%</b>	8%
	2016	73%	14%	13%	0%
Do you go out just by yourself	<b>2018</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	2017	57%	21%	18%	4%
	2016	82%	3%	15%	0%
Are you (or others) under the influence of alcohol	<b>2018</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>4%</b>
	2017	51%	31%	<b>8%</b>	10%
	2016	58%	25%	12%	5%

**2018 True n=39** Caution: small sample sizes.

**2017 True n=46**

**2016 True n=30**

### When you are in charge (of a large boat more than 6m) ...

How often do you:		Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Check the weather or marine forecasts before you go out in the boat	<b>2018</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>31%</b>
	2017	1%	16%	10%	<b>74%</b>
	2016	0%	24%	20%	56%
Carry at least one waterproof way of communicating? (E.g. Mobile phone, VHF radio, flares, locator beacons.)	<b>2018</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>41%</b>
	2017	0%	14%	19%	67%
Check a water or boating safety code, website or app?	<b>2018</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>16%</b>
	2017	16%	<b>55%</b>	<b>9%</b>	20%
	2016	<b>21%</b>	16%	41%	22%
Carry two different types of communication?	<b>2018</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>33%</b>
	2017	0%	<b>16%</b>	12%	<b>73%</b>

**2018 True n=19** Caution: small sample sizes.

**2017 True n=24**

**2016 True n=16**

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.  
Caution: small sample sizes.

## 6.9 Accidental falls in water

**7%** said they had accidentally fallen in water in the last 12 months – up from 4% in 2016.

- 39% fell in a river or stream, 19% at a lake or pond, and 18% in a harbour or estuary
- There was a decrease in the proportion who experienced a fall at an unpatrolled beach (from 26% in 2017 to 10% in 2018)

### Where did you accidentally fall in the water in New Zealand in the last 12 months?

	2018	2017	2016
River or stream	39%	38%	31%
Lake or pond	19%	23%	20%
Harbour/Estuary	18%	10%	9%
Public swimming pool	14%	23%	28%
Patrolled Beach or coastline (with life guards)	13%	16%	4%
Private swimming pool	12%	21%	19%
Off-shore or at sea	11%	17%	13%
Unpatrolled beach or coastline (no life guards)	10%	26%	12%
In the bath/bathing	6%	14%	6%
Somewhere else	0%	4%	4%
True n=	87	63	46

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.

### Demographic variations

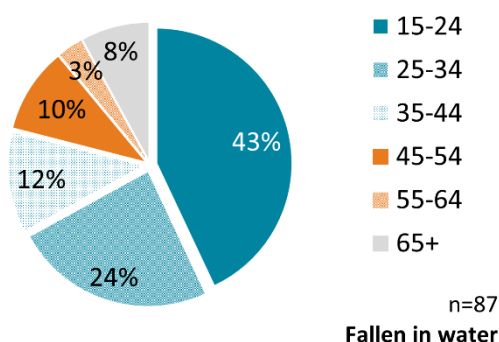
Groups more likely than average to have accidentally fallen in water in the past 12 months were young people aged 15 to 24 years (18%), and NZ Māori (11%).

### Accidentally fell in the water by age

	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	2018
Age group	18%	10%	6%	5%	2%	3%	7%
n=	270	171	167	163	155	168	1,094

If we just look at the group (n=87) who have accidentally fallen in water, then 43% were aged 15 to 24 years, and 24% were 25 to 34 years old.

### Accidental falls in water by age group



## 7. Risk takers

This section presents the results of an analysis that looked at risk taking behaviours reported by respondents.

### Notes on risk analysis

For analysis purposes, individuals had broad risk profiles assigned:

1. No Risk	2. Low Risk	3. Medium Risk	4. High Risk
------------	-------------	----------------	--------------

These four risk profiles were assigned at broad activity levels of:

1. Swimming (including wading/paddling)
2. Boating (Sailing, power boating)
3. Water sports (canoeing, surfing, jet skiing, underwater activities etc.)
4. Fishing & food gathering
5. Pre-school caregivers

For each individual, the number of reported risk taking behaviours was assessed against their number of activities to provide a risk score (%), which is then classified into the risk profiles.

This year, we also included questions about carrying at least one waterproof and two different types of communication as part of the risk analysis. These questions were retroactively added to the 2017 results so that a comparison could be made.

In the discussion below, specific groups are described as over or under-represented when they appear in a category out of proportion to their actual numbers. For example, if 50% of our respondents are male, and 75% of those classified as high-risk takers are male then we would say that males are over-represented by half (50%).

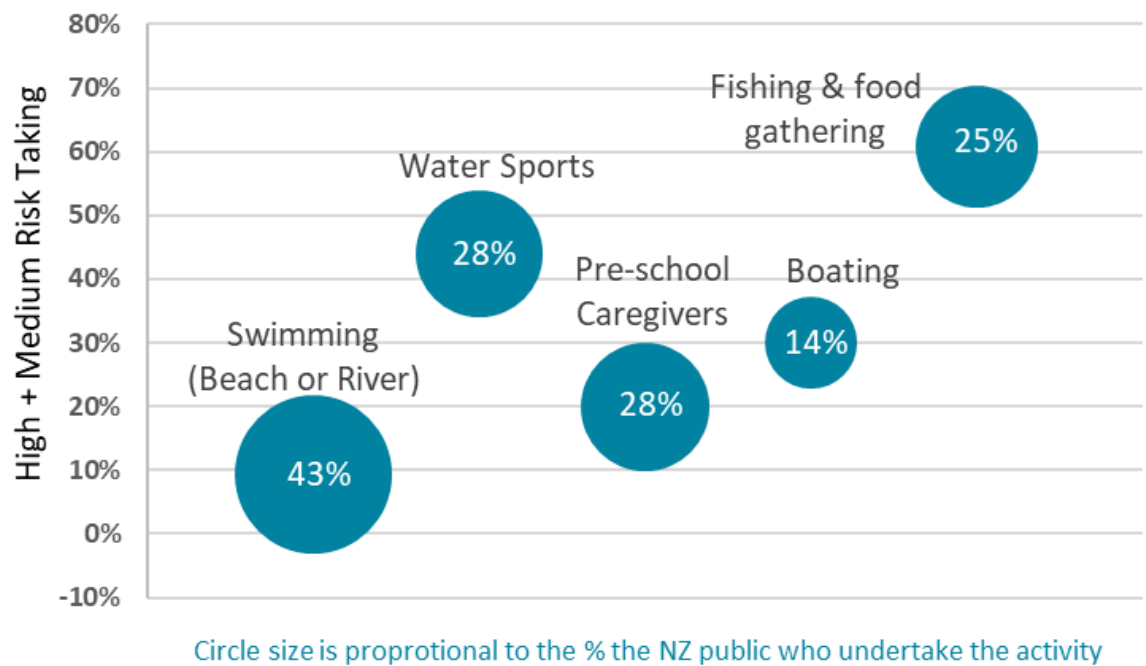
### Risk taker results

The results have been fairly consistent across the three surveys.

- Fishing and food gathering continues to have the highest level of medium and high risk taking behaviour (61%) compared to 58% last year.
- However, for swimming there has been a significant improvement – the proportion who participated in high and medium risk behaviour has significantly declined – from 24% in 2016 to 9% in 2018.

Proportion of High + Medium Risk Takers	2018	2017	2016
Fishing & food gathering	61%	58%	65%
Water Sports	44%	46%	43%
Boating	30%	31%	27%
Pre-school Caregivers	20%	22%	21%
Swimming	9%	10%	24%

Blue indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while Red indicates result is significantly lower.



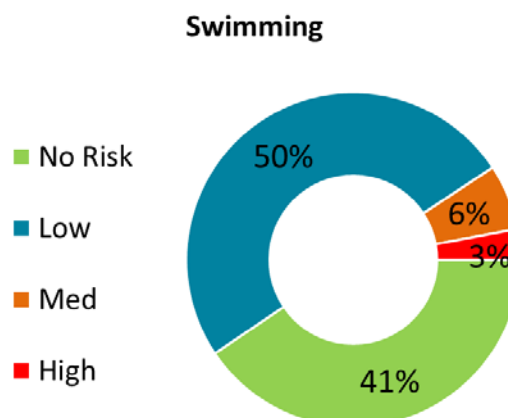
<b>Risk Profiles 2018</b>	<b>No risk</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Med</b>	<b>High risk</b>	<b>High + Med risk</b>	<b>Proportion of population</b>
Fishing & food gathering	6%	33%	46%	15%	<b>61%</b>	25%
Water Sports	27%	29%	20%	24%	<b>44%</b>	28%
Boating	32%	38%	22%	8%	<b>30%</b>	14%
Pre-school Caregivers	50%	30%	14%	6%	<b>20%</b>	28%
Swimming	41%	50%	6%	3%	<b>9%</b>	43%

## 7.1 Swimming risk takers

Risk taking behaviours were monitored for swimming, wading or paddling at unpatrolled beaches, patrolled beaches and in rivers and streams. A total of 496 respondents (45%, unweighted) reported undertaking at least one swimming activity.

The levels of risk taking are similar to 2017 but significantly less than 2016, particularly for medium and high-level risk taking.

Swimming Risk	2018	2017	2016
No Risk	41%	42%	50%
Low	50%	48%	26%
Medium	6%	8%	17%
High	3%	2%	6%



### Who are swimming risk takers?

When we look at everyone who reported taking some degree of risk when swimming (low, medium or high risk), we see:

- All respondents aged 15-24 are over-represented almost twice as much for medium to high-level risk taking (93%)
- Asians are over-represented by double the level of risk taking (101%)
- Those who are within the lowest income bracket (less than \$30,000) were over-represented by 74% as risk takers
- Under 35 year olds are over-represented amongst risk takers by half (53%)

**Risk takers appear to be aged under 35, but particularly in the 15 to 24 age group. They also appear to be Asian and fall within the lowest income bracket.**

### Who are the High-risk takers?

Looking at those people who have been classed as high-risk takers, we find those over represented are:

- Males - significantly over-represented by nearly a third (28%)
- Aged under 35 - over-represented by four-fifths (59%)
  - those aged 15 -24 present at over twice the rate one would expect (121%)
- Young males (15-24) are over-represented by a fifth (22%)
- Asian peoples are over-represented by 2.3 times the national average (136%)
- Those earning less than \$50,000 per year by more than 2.3 times (138%)

Those under-represented (or the least likely to be high risk takers) are:

- People aged 45 or older are under represented by 44%
- Those outside of the urban areas
- Those of Pacific Island descent by 100% - a significant improvement since last year, where they were over-represented by over 100%
- Pre-school Caregivers by 100%

**High-risk takers are predominantly male, under 35, Asian, living in urban areas, and earning less than \$50,000 per annum.**

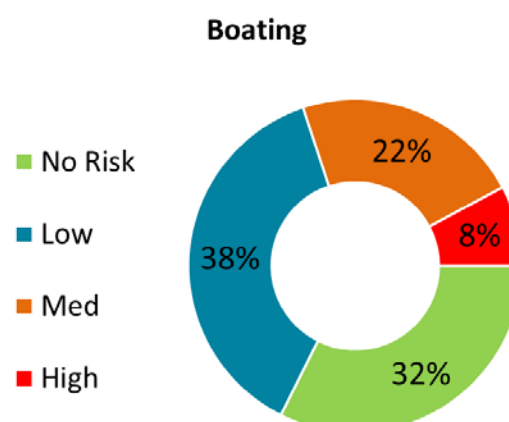
## 7.2 Boating

Risk taking behaviours were monitored for sailing in both large (more than 6m) and smaller craft, and for power boating. A total of 140 respondents (13%, unweighted) reported undertaking at least one of these boating activities.

Boating Risk	2018	2017 <sup>a</sup>	2016 <sup>a</sup>
No Risk	32%	41%	33%
Low	38%	28%	40%
Medium	22%	23%	16%
High	8%	8%	11%

<sup>a</sup> Additional risk questions were added retroactively to 2017's data, and these risk questions were not present in 2016's survey.

Boaties appear to be somewhat riskier than swimmers, with 30% of them being medium to high risk takers. These statistics have changed very little over the past three years, although there were less 'Low' risk takers last year.



### Who are boating risk takers?

When we look at everyone who reported taking some degree of risk when boating (low, medium or high risk), we see:

- Men are slightly over-represented
- People aged 15-24 are over-represented by 36%
- Asians are over-represented by 30%
- Middle income earners (\$50,000 to \$69,000) are present by an additional 48%
- Those in Northland and East North island are over-represented by a third (29%)

**Young males who are middle income earners, Asian, live in Northland or the East North Island are the boating risk takers this year.**

### Who are the High-risk takers?

Again, when we look at those people who have been classed as high-risk takers, the data is a little more revealing. Those over represented are:

- Men by almost two-fifths (38%), but not as over-represented as last year (67%)
- Asians are over-represented by double
- Those in cities by 41%
- Two distinct income brackets:
  - \$30K to \$50K by almost twice as much (96%)
  - \$70K to \$100K by three-quarters (75%)
- Aged under 45 - over-represented by over two-thirds (68%)
  - those aged 35-44 present at 2.3 times the rate one would expect

Those under-represented (or less likely to be high risk-takers) are:

- Women (by 66%)
- Those outside of the urban areas (by 54%)
- People over 45 years of age (by 80%)
- NZ Māori (by 55%)
- Pacific Islanders (by 100%)
- Those from Central New Zealand (by 100%)

**So, high-risk takers tend to be under 45 (who represent 54% of boaties but make up 90% of high risk takers), those from cities (who represent 57% of boaties but make up 80% of high risk takers), Asians and those in the middle and upper income brackets.**

## 7.3 Water sports

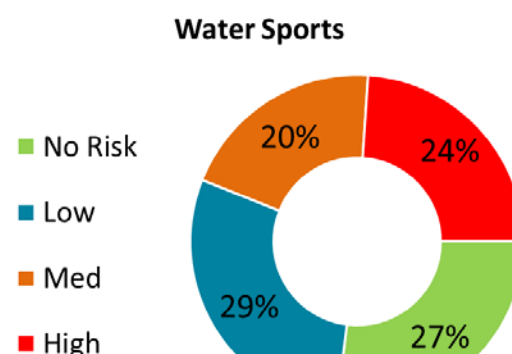
Risk taking behaviours were monitored for:

- Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, or stand up paddleboarding
- Surfing, boogie boarding, or wind surfing
- Underwater activities (snorkelling, scuba diving etc.) and
- Jet skiing

A total of 322 respondents (29%, unweighted) reported undertaking at least one of these water sport activities. Almost half of respondents (44%) showed at least a medium level of risky behaviour. Additionally, there appears to be a shift in those showing medium risk behaviour toward those showing high risk behaviour compared to last year. This is not a positive shift with regards to water safety, as people are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviour compared to 2017.

Water Sports Risks	2018	2017 <sup>a</sup>	2016 <sup>a</sup>
No Risk	27%	29%	51%
Low	29%	25%	6%
Medium	20%	28%	25%
High	24%	18%	18%

<sup>a</sup> Additional risk questions were added retroactively to 2017's data, and these risk questions were not present in 2016's survey.



### Who are water sports risk takers?

When we look at everyone who reported some degree of risk taking when participating in water

sports (low, medium or high risk), we see that the following groups are over-represented:

- Those 65 years or over (by 27%) but this is due to small numbers
- Young males (15-24 years of age) are slightly over-represented
- People who are 25 to 34 years of age (by 12%)
- Respondents who make between \$70K and \$100K (by 18%)

**Risk takers, in general, appear slightly dominated by the elderly or young men, but they are fairly representative of the water sports community.**

### Who are the High-risk takers?

Those over represented are:

- Men are slightly over-represented by a tenth
- Males aged 15 to 24 years by a fifth (19%)
- Those under 45 by a quarter (23%)
- Those of Asian descent (38%)
- Non-caregivers or those who do not look after pre-school aged children (23%)
- Aucklanders are over-represented by 20%

Those under-represented (and less likely to be high-risk takers) are:

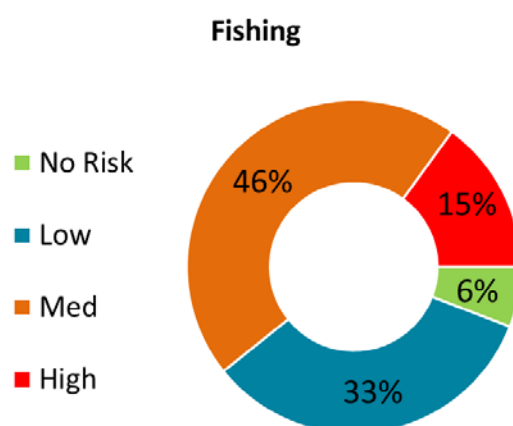
- Aged 45 years and over (by 63%)
- Women are under-represented by a tenth (11%)
- NZ Māori by a sixth (16%)
- Those living in rural areas (53%)
- Respondents from Northland and Eastern North Island (43%) or Central NZ (30%)

**High-risk takers tend to be under 45, Asian, who do not look after pre-school aged children.**

## 7.4 Fishing and food gathering

A total of 269 respondents (25%, unweighted) reported undertaking fishing or food gathering activities in the past 12 months. Most participants (94%) reported at least some risk behaviour, with three-fifths (61%) reporting either medium or high-risk behaviour.

Comparing the risk to previous years, we find that there is a significant drop in those showing no risk – indicating that people are more likely to engage in risky behaviour while fishing and food gathering this year. Additionally, there is a slow increase in those participating in high-risk behaviour over the past two years.



Fishing & Food Gathering Risk	2018	2017 <sup>a</sup>	2016 <sup>a</sup>
No Risk	6%	10%	11%
Low	33%	32%	24%
Medium	46%	45%	59%
High	15%	13%	6%

<sup>a</sup> Additional risk questions were added retroactively to 2017's data, and these risk questions were not present in 2016's survey.

### Who are fishing and food gathering risk takers?

When we look at everyone who reported some degree of risk taking when fishing or food gathering (low, medium or high risk), we see...

**Risk takers are very representative of the fishing and food gathering community – similar to last year.**

This result is not surprising given the high proportion who report taking at least some risk.

### Who are the High risk takers?

Those over represented were:

- Young males aged 15-24 (45%)
- Pacific Islanders (65%)
- Aucklanders - by a third (35%)
- Those who are not caregivers (26%)

**So, high-risk takers are typically young males, living in Auckland, of Pacific Island descent who do not look after young children.**

## 7.5 Looking after a preschool child near water

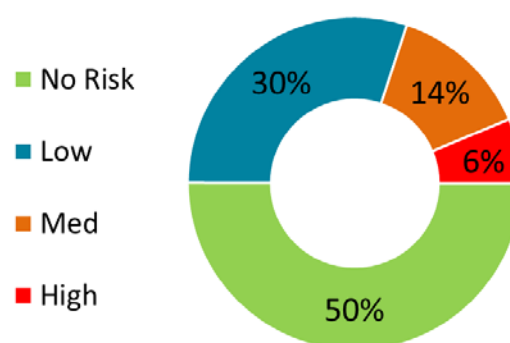
This risk threshold for classifying care of a pre-schooler is set more strictly than for other activities. To be classified as “no risk” the respondent must:

- Stay within arm's reach of the child? - Always
- Leave them unsupervised (even briefly)? - Never
- Get distracted? - Never

A total of 314 respondents (29%, unweighted) reported looking after a pre-school child near water in the past 12 months. There has been little change in the risk behaviour over the past three years. Half of those caring for pre-schoolers near water have been categorised as no risk. Only 6% were high-risk takers, and a further 14% were medium risk takers, effectively placing a fifth (20%) in the medium to high-risk category.

Pre-school Caregivers Risk	2018	2017	2016
No Risk	50%	52%	51%
Low	30%	26%	28%
Medium	14%	16%	15%
High	6%	6%	7%

Pre-school Caregivers



### Who are risk takers?

When we look at everyone who reported some degree of risk taking care of a pre-schooler near water (low, medium or high risk), we see:

- Those under 45 are over-represented by nearly a fifth (18%)
- Males are over-represented by a quarter (24%)
  - Young males (15-24) by 15%
- Asians are over-represented by two-fifths (41%)

**So, risk takers tend to be young, Asian, and men.**

### Who are the High-risk takers?

It is worth noting that only 6% report as high-risk takers.

Those over represented are:

- Aged under 45 years old – they are over-represented amongst the high risk-takers by two fifths (40%)
- Males by 44%
  - Young males (15-24) by 34%
- Some specific ethnicities:
  - NZ Māori by 21%
  - Asians by 84%
- Pre-school Caregivers (have child under 5 in household) by 36%
- City dwellers by 19%

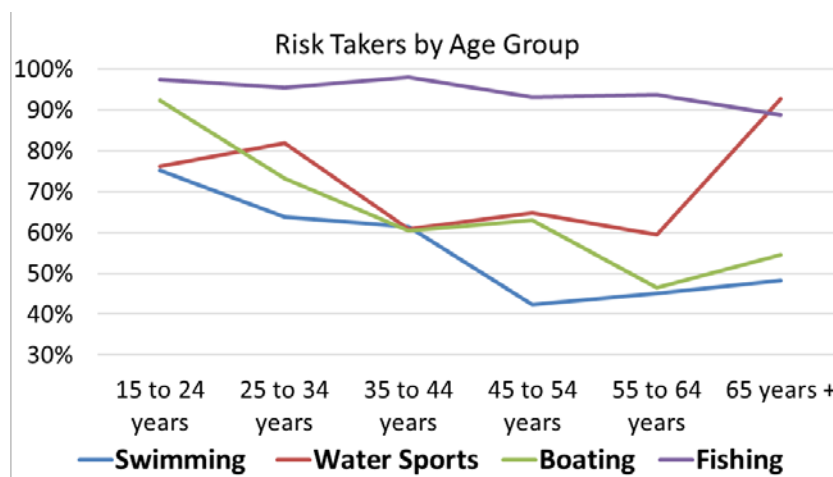
Those who are under-represented as high risk takers include:

- Females by nearly a third (29%)
- Those over 45 by 71%
- Those who identify as Pacific Peoples by over two-thirds (69%)

**So, high-risk takers are males aged under 45 years old, city-based and likely of Asian or NZ Māori descent.**

## 7.6 Risk taking and age

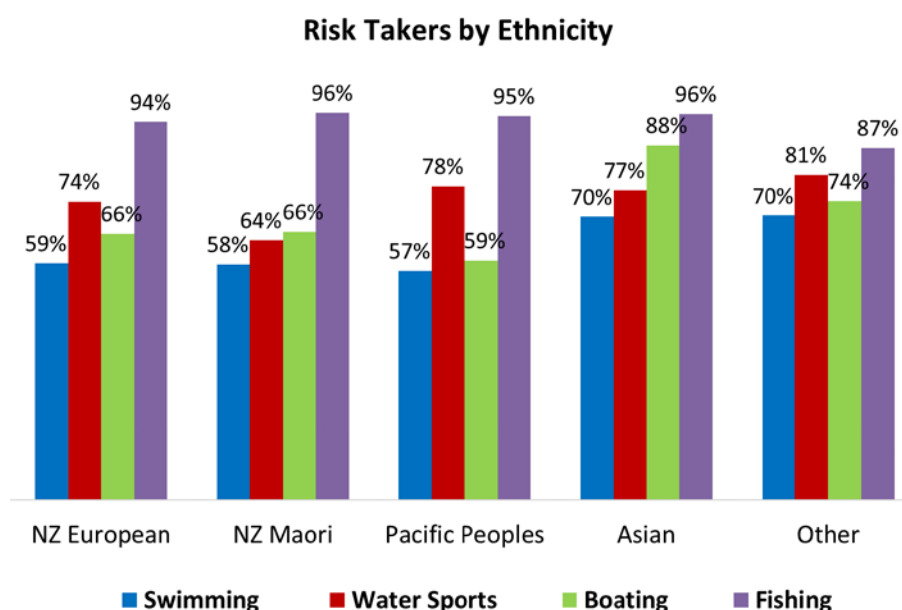
It is reasonable to assume that as we age, we become more cautious and less likely to engage in risky behaviour. This assumption seems valid for most of the water-based activities examined, except for water sports. Interestingly, there is a spike in the percentage of risky behaviour in those aged 65+ who participated in water sports - this age group is the riskiest. This result could indicate that the more prosperous baby boomers are becoming more interested in water sports but may not necessarily be aware of the associated dangers. Moreover, those over 65 are more likely to take risks than those aged 55-64 years of age in all water activities except fishing.



NB: All risk takers are included here: Low, medium and high risk combined.

## 7.7 Risk taking and ethnicity

This section examines any differences in the level of risk-taking behaviour among the different ethnicities. Over half of each ethnicity exhibits some sort of risky behaviour for each of the different activities, with fishing ranking the highest and swimming the lowest in risk-taking behaviour. It is clear to see from the chart below that Asians and those of "Other" ethnicities rank the highest in risk-taking across all water-based activities. Asians ranked the highest in risk-taking for boating – significantly higher than all other ethnicities. Pacific Peoples were the least risky for swimming and boating, and NZ Māori were the least risky in water sports.



NB: All risk takers are included here: Low, medium and high risk combined.

## 7.8 Risk taking and gender

### Gender variations

Swimming:

- Men and women both have similar risk profiles

Water Sports:

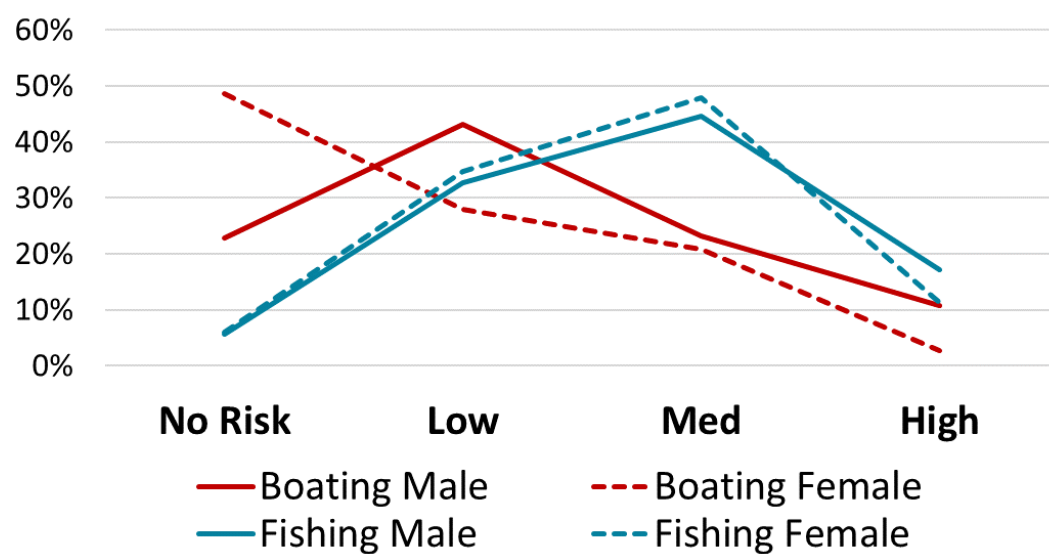
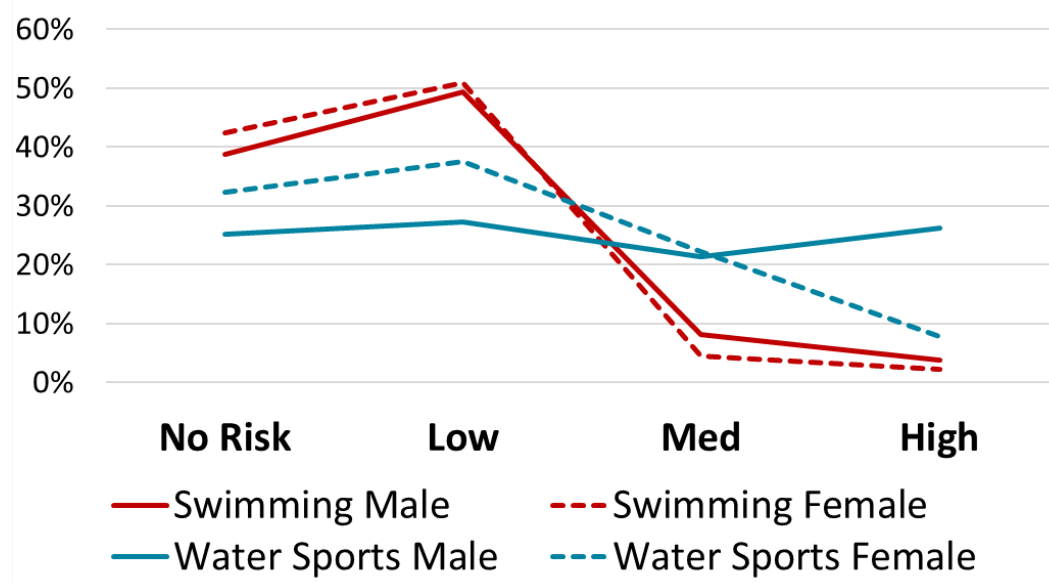
- Men display more high-risk behaviour

Boating:

- Overall men present a riskier profile than women

Fishing:

- Men and women both have similar risk profiles



## 8. Personal experiences

This section attempts to measure the proportion of the New Zealand public who have first-hand experience of a serious situation in the water, and the main factors they think caused the problem.

**35%** stated they have experienced a serious situation in the water – consistent with 33% from the previous two years. 40% said the main factor that caused the problem was under-estimating the conditions, while 30% attributed it to lack of knowledge of the environment, 26% to lack of skills, and 24% to over confidence.

### Do you have first-hand experience of a serious situation in the water?

(Have you ever got into serious difficulty yourself, or seen someone else in trouble?)

	2018	2017	2016
Yes	<b>35%</b>	33%	33%
No	<b>63%</b>	65%	64%
Don't know	<b>3%</b>	3%	3%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,000</b>

**Blue** indicates result is significantly higher than the 2018 result at 95% confidence, while **Red** indicates result is significantly lower.  
NB: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### What do you think were the main factors that caused the problem?

	2018	2017	2016
Underestimating the conditions	<b>40%</b>	44%	42%
Lack of knowledge of the environment	<b>30%</b>	32%	30%
Lack of skills (e.g. not being able to swim)	<b>26%</b>	28%	29%
Over confidence	<b>24%</b>	29%	23%
Lack of common sense	<b>19%</b>	24%	19%
Poor supervision	<b>15%</b>	16%	15%
They took a risk	<b>14%</b>	16%	15%
Accidentally fell in the water	<b>13%</b>	17%	18%
Bad luck	<b>13%</b>	12%	16%
Just having fun	<b>12%</b>	14%	14%
Weather	<b>12%</b>	11%	NA
Not following safety warnings or notices	<b>11%</b>	15%	10%
Hidden obstacles	<b>10%</b>	12%	12%
Showing off	<b>9%</b>	<b>14%</b>	10%
Not wearing a life jacket	<b>8%</b>	12%	8%
Lack of safety equipment, or not being prepared	<b>8%</b>	9%	8%
Alcohol	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	7%
Storm or flood	<b>5%</b>	6%	3%
Peer group pressure	<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	8%
Poor health	<b>4%</b>	5%	3%
Drugs	<b>2%</b>	4%	2%
Lack of means of communication	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>	N/A
Other	<b>13%</b>	12%	11%
<b>True n=</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>333</b>

Note: Respondents selected as many as applied from a list.

N/A: Added to list in 2017.

While overall a third (35%) said they have first-hand experience:

- Māori (42%) were more likely to have experienced a serious situation in water, while those of other ethnicities were less likely (26%)
- Women were more likely to say they haven't experienced a serious situation (66%) compared to men (60%)

Those who had first-hand experience were asked to describe who got into trouble.

From what we can tell:

- Two-fifths (41%) specified they were personally involved in the incident
- Over a third (36%) mentioned that children (under the age of 15) were involved
- Over half (53%) involved swimming, surfing, or boogie boarding
- Over two-fifths (43%) of the incidents occurred at a beach/seaside or at sea

There were several types of situations and perspectives described – some were themselves in trouble, others were the rescuers or bystanders. Almost all of the situations were unexpected, due to carelessness or going outside their capabilities or limits. It was up to the respondent to provide as much or as little information as they were comfortable providing. Hence, the type of information included by each respondent varied, however there were some common themes that emerged and these are summarised below, followed by some examples of the comments.

***Please describe who got into trouble in the water***

	2018	2017	2016
<b>Specific people mentioned...</b>			
Me - the respondent	41%	46%	50%
Children aged under 15 years	36%	37%	46%
Older teens (15-19 years)	14%	13%	13%
Young adults (20's)	9%	9%	11%
Adults (30+)	12%	11%	3%
<b>Specific activities mentioned...</b>			
Swimming/surfing/boogie boarding	53%	57%	48%
Boating	12%	12%	12%
Fell in/paddling/jumped in	9%	22%	10%
Fishing/diving	4%	N/A	N/A
Water sports (kayaking, canoeing etc.)	2%	6%	6%
<b>Locations mentioned...</b>			
Beach/seaside/at sea	43%	45%	42%
Swimming pool	17%	16%	12%
River	13%	17%	15%
Lake/pond	4%	2%	4%
Estuary/tidal area	3%	2%	4%
Harbour/wharf	2%	3%	8%
Home/stream/swim hole	2%	1%	2%
<b>Causes mentioned...</b>			
Unprepared/fell/capsized/underestimated conditions	33%	22%	23%
Rip/strong currents/big wave - wiped out	25%	29%	34%
Lack of supervision	6%	4%	5%
Mechanical failure	2%	3%	2%
Murder/suicide/held under	1%	N/A	N/A
Trouble from trying to rescue others	<1%	1%	1%
<b>Based on unprompted comments, multiple themes coded separately</b>	<b>n=372</b>	<b>n=339</b>	<b>n=333</b>

N/A: Codes added in 2018.

## While fishing...

Some incidents when fishing from a boat or from rocks on the shore.

- > *Two men on a boat fishing despite storm warnings, 30-43yrs, close to the main passage. Sea was rough, outboard engine couldn't start. Both under the influence of liquor. Located 5 hours later drifting, then towed to the shore. Both men don't even know how to swim at all.*
- > *Myself and my father out fishing when I was a teenager, bad weather whipped up the water, we got kelp caught in the jet unit intake, motor over heated and we had no way of powering out, getting washed close to the rocks, friends were able to get in close to us and tow our boat out of trouble. Dad badly gashed his leg in the ordeal.*
- > *Beach... lost half my family at Waikawau, Thames. They got caught in a rip picking mussels.*
- > *A young fellow 23 years old was wearing long gumboots, and thought it was a good idea to jump into the water to retrieve his hinaki, as it had become stuck on a submerged log. His gumboots filled with water, which dragged him down into a pool with a depth of 3 metres. This person panicked, and started splashing, and squirming as my friend and I could see him sinking. I scramble down the bank to where he entered the water and, secured the end of the hinaki rope to a solid branch, then dived in the water and grabbed the first thing I could which was the cape of the hoody he was wearing and just pulled him up-wards at the same time using the rope to pull myself to the surface. By then my friend was also on the spot where I had tied the rope and helped me pull the guy up on the bank. Lucky for the guy he didn't need CPR as he was busy coughing up water and trying to clear his lungs. He said he tried to kick his gumboots off, but they were stuck, caused by the suction of the water entering his gumboots. This happened at a river in my home town.*
- > *We were on our little boat off the shore from Wellington fishing. Myself, my dad and uncle. The engine wouldn't start and we started to drift into Cook Strait. We tried rowing but couldn't row fast enough and kept going further from the coast. Fortunately, we got rescued by a salvage vessel that spotted us. This was in the days before cell phones and almost nobody we knew had a radio on a small craft.*

## Examples of swimming pool incidents

Lack of supervision and going into deep water seemed to be mostly responsible for swimming pool incidents. Adequate and capable adult supervision averts many potential disasters.

- > *Two-year-old at home. They accessed a fenced pool through the house door and fell in.*
- > *Toddler fell into my parent's spa pool at a party. At 8 yrs. old I pulled them out. (Alive.)*
- > *My daughter was following the older children who had more confidence in the pool. She was having fun and wanted to keep up with them. She had a minor drowning experience.*
- > *My brother fell into the pool when he was about 4 and was not a confident swimmer, so gulped a bunch of water. He was being supervised, but ran to jump into the water when we had turned around to get something. He was retrieved from the water straight away and there were no damaging effects, fortunately.*
- > *Me, when I was 8 and it had happened in a hotel pool. There was a deeper section in the pool where I went in without knowing, almost drowned but was saved by a relative member.*
- > *I worked as a lifeguard for many years and have seen so many babies / young children get into trouble due to lack of supervision from parents or they get put into flotation devices which are just supposed to assist and the parents then turn their backs and they tip.*
- > *I was 13 years old when I got into trouble in the water at a public swimming pool. I am not able to swim, yet I sit by the pool and watch my friends swimming. Out of a sudden, I felt someone pushing me from my back and I fell into the water.*
- > *Approx. six-year-old child at public swimming pool while one life-saver was indisposed and other was chatting up current /prospective girlfriend.*

## At the beach

Potential accidents often occurred when swimmers underestimated the size of the waves, strength of the current or water depth.

- > *Young girl, about 10-12 years old, got caught in rip of outgoing tide. Quick thinking teenage boys managed to rescue her on their sea kayak.*
- > *Went swimming at a public beach at about 15 years old and didn't know about what the flags meant or rips so ended up way off the shore and tried to swim back and couldn't. Luckily I didn't panic and thought to swim sideways to another part of the shore and that worked. I learned a number of years later about that beach being notorious for rips, so finally figured out what had happened to me. Whew!*
- > *Very young child wading at the edge on the beach bowled over by a large unexpected wave, being washed out to sea.*
- > *Three girls got caught in a rip and was getting dragged out to sea, they the girls were calling out for help as we were walking along the beach, Back Beach New Plymouth. We got 2 of the girls out but had to go out further to get the last girl out, as we made a chain and myself got stuck in the rip with the waves going over my head. I called out for help but no one came to help. There were a lot of people on the beach. I tried not to panic, so I started walking sideways out of the rip catching every gap I could to get air, and kept digging my feet into the sand until I was on shore. I was drained but happy to be alive and no thank you from the girls, they looked about 16 17 years old but I thanked my cuzzy and brother for their help in saving three lives and nearly in return for my own safety I thank God as well.*
- > *Sister at age 8 where she swam out a little far and the ground dropped off at the beach, and panicked. Also, friends being peer pressured to swim, and drinking alcohol and being insistent on going for a swim.*
- > *Me, I was 18 and was swimming between the flags at a high energy south Auckland beach, but I got pushed out of the flags by the water and got caught in a rip. I couldn't touch the ground. Lifeguards saved me.*
- > *Me at Piha. First time enjoying catching the waves. Went in deeper to catch a bigger wave and didn't seem deep. Suddenly it was deep like hole or dip. Wave crashed on top of me and I swallowed some water.*
- > *I have been a lifeguard at a beach on the East Coast of NZ for many years. I have done easily 50+ rescues from people underestimating the conditions and getting caught in a rip. The most common type of person is middle-aged men that are tourists and don't understand the specific dangers than arise from beaches in NZ. I have also experienced people drowning from these same types of situations.*

## The use of alcohol

Combining alcohol consumption with water-based activities is a recipe for disaster. It affects people's assessment of the situation and their decision-making.

- > *We encountered a boatload of youthful to middle-aged Polynesians out fishing; their boat was taking on water. The occupants - too many for the size of the vessel, all without lifejackets and all intoxicated - were panicking, clearly with no means of calling for help. Our boat had to assist the idiots and make the call for assistance.*
- > *Two men on a boat fishing despite storm warnings. 30-43yrs, close to the main passage. Sea was rough, outboard engine couldn't start. Both under the influence of liquor. Located 5 hrs later drifting then towed to the shore. Both men don't even know how to swim at all.*
- > *I jumped off a rock into a deep waterhole I'm familiar with, at 16, very drunk and made a poor decision.*
- > *Drunk jumped off Devonport Ferry after argument with partner & had to be retrieved. 20's.*

## Incidents involving young children

It's distressing how quickly accidents can happen involving young children in and around water. It only takes a few seconds to get in trouble and drown. Attentive adults may avert disaster, but unfortunately, sometimes it is too late.

- > *Two and half year-old grandchild left to his own devices by his father at Raglan. He went under the water and drowned, was removed from water blue, unconscious, not breathing, found by two passers-by who resuscitated him. Was transferred to hospital.*
- > *Small child almost drowned at public pool. Life guard had to rescue child. Poor supervision by parents/caregiver.*
- > *Niece when she was about 8, was in a little rubber blow up boat and was trying to use the oars. She was out a little then the wind and water caught her and she kept going out. My husband tried to swim and catch her but couldn't reach her. The life guards were called to rescue her and my husband far out from the shoreline. Very scary time.*
- > *Me at age 2, was left alone at the public pool and fell in the 5m pool, also me at age 10 got caught in a rip while at an unsupervised beach. 2 friends age 13/14 while at a public pool could not swim properly and I had to tow them back to the exit.*
- > *Me aged 4 in public swimming pool. Held under water by unknown children.*
- > *It was me when I was very young, toddler aged. I was currently learning how to swim but hadn't fully learned the skill. I was with family at a quiet river when I walked into the water without knowing its depth, my mum dove in very quickly and took me back to the edge of the water.*
- > *It was me when I was about 6 years old. I was at the beach and playing in the water with a blow-up ring. My mum was up the beach on the sand sunbathing. I got flipped by a wave and couldn't get myself the right way up. It was very scary for me. My mum didn't notice I was trapped under the water. Another time I was at the public pool for a school event. I told my teachers I can't swim but it was compulsory for all students to try out for swimming relays. I doggy paddled most of the way, but by the time I got to the deep end I was tired and started to go under. A student nearby pulled me to the side of the pool.*
- > *I was a child. We were at the lake with others and a toddler wasn't being watched and either went in or fell in the lake off an inflatable dingy. The other was at girl guides, they made a rope bridge across a river. One side was tied to a dead tree on the edge of the river bank. I thought it was unsafe (10 years old) and saw it move with others. Then when I crossed it fell in. I fell in and it pinned me under the water. I didn't panic. I don't recall breathing in water. I don't remember getting rescued, but I was.*
- > *As I have been a lifeguard at a west coast Auckland beach I have saved numerous people. All ages & ethnicities but most got caught in rips, were wearing clothing, didn't swim to their ability etc. More recently I jumped in and pulled a toddler out at Waiwera pools as he was starting to 'climb the ladder' he was with his au pair who thought he was fine (he was 2.5 years & out of arms reach & first time in the pool). They were Japanese so I am not sure of their water safety/awareness. It happened so quickly that my instincts kicked in & I reacted without trying to get the adults to go in.*
- > *3-4 year old at a river, fell in because their mother wasn't watching them. My mother was the one to grab the child.*

## Being unprepared and underestimating the conditions and water depth

Being unprepared to enter the water, underestimating the conditions, water depth and weather-related factors seemed to be responsible for most of the reported incidents. Swimmers at the beach or at a river are often surprised at sudden changes in depth or overestimate their swimming experience and panic.

- > *The man was about 18 - 20 yrs old, walked past us (group of young friends) sky larking and straight in to a river estuary at high tide. Stepped into a hole over his head and couldn't swim. Efforts to retrieve him failed and he was found later by a rescue police boat.*
- > *Kid was about 10, fell in a flooded creek, wasn't able to touch the bottom and panicked. Was in the country after rainy weather.*
- > *It was me and I walked off an underwater sand bank into nothing. Immediate panic and sheer willpower got me back to safety. I have not been in deep waters since.*
- > *Younger sister 11yrs at the time at Hunua Falls also didn't help with her jumping into the water with heavy clothing on.*
- > *Some idiot at the beach decided to go swimming in weather conditions they should not have been out in so I had to rescue them.*
- > *Middle aged man taking weather readings on pier in winter stormy weather, slipped and fell. Drowned.*
- > *Male 35 at sea in a kayak. Big wave got me and filled kayak with water. Ripped front hatch of kayak as well. No life jacket, track pants and a sweat shirt. Took me 2hrs to get back to shore.*

## Boats

Accidents involving boats often happen when something aboard malfunctions or when there is a sudden change in weather conditions or tides. While the 'life jacket message' seems fairly strong among the boaters, not everything can be predicted. Boaters can be caught out unprepared.

- > *Rowers in their late teens. Not familiar with the lake, the weather forecast was incorrect. A sudden weather bomb arrived from an unseen and unexpected direction.*
- > *On a catamaran once at Akaroa Harbour - my husband when he was in his late 20s and again both of us in the Abel Tasman in our late 20s when a storm blew up out of nowhere and we were stranded for five days.*
- > *Myself 39, dad 71, father-in-law 54, and my brother-in-law 44, on the boat. We just finished cleaning our catch for the day pull the anchor start the engine, it wouldn't start. Managed to get the engine started before the wind, tide and the rain hit in completely covering land couldn't see anything. It rained hard for a good 20 minutes. Once I saw a little bit of land that was my key to speed up, to get closer to land and the boat ramp. It was a hell of the last 30-45 minutes of my day but thank God we all made it home safely that afternoon.*
- > *My father drowned in a fishing trip 17 years ago, moved boat was in gear, flipped and he got stuck under boat on lake Opuha near Fairlie, South Canterbury.*
- > *Me when a boat caught unexpected waves and threw me onto some rocks. Couldn't come up for air and was un-prepared.*
- > *Island trading ships when in the early years there were not the communication means available these days. So unaware that storms were coming, i.e. in the Kiribits Islands and Western Samoa.*
- > *I was with my friends riding a boat in the ocean. And my friends and I thought it's fun if we left the boat in the middle of the ocean and swam back to the shore. It was around 4pm at the time when the waves were getting stronger than I could manage. My friends managed to get to the shore quickly but it took me a while and I was actually getting brought to the waves' direction which is away from the shore. I swam back as hard as I could even though it was getting too difficult and when I finally got back to the shore I almost passed out. I was 19 at the time.*
- > *A cousin of mine died at some harbour because the captain crossed the sand bar on a really windy day.... and all 11 members did not make it including the captain..... sadly life jackets were small apparently.*

## Rips and fast flowing currents

Rips at the beach and fast flowing currents in rivers seemed to be responsible for many incidents in these areas. Swimmers at the beach often got caught in a rip and they may not have had the experience or ability to swim out of them. They struggled, and may have got fatigued and swept out to sea. Some respondents, however, remembered the water safety messages associated with getting out of rips and strong currents safely.

- > *Myself. I was 16 at Muriwai Beach I went out too far and was struggling to get back and started to sink, I remember a program on tv, they said don't struggle just lie back and the tide took me back to shore, whew close call it was.*
- > *Young girl, about 10-12 years old, got caught in rip of outgoing tide. Quick thinking teenage boys managed to rescue her on their sea kayak.*
- > *Waka ama training, on board were five teenage girls all under the age of 13. I was steering. I underestimated how strong the current was and we got swept under Mangere Bridge at high tide. Luckily everyone was there. People pulled the girls off first while I stayed in the waka to keep it from sweeping under, my coach jumped into the waka with me, my husband jumped into another boat and pulled us out of the current. We were all wearing life jackets, the girls were a bit shaken, so was I but physically we were ok.*
- > *Myself, in my late teens (15-17) at Waipu Cove, not sure if I was swimming between the flags but I got caught up in a rip and I kept getting dragged back. A stranger came to help me.*
- > *Myself, 14, river conditions were stronger than I thought and I ended up washed under an overhanging rock. Friend grabbed my arm and pulled me out. Have hardly been in the water except swimming pools since.*
- > *Me, I was 18 and was swimming between the flags at a high energy south Auckland beach but I got pushed out of the flags by the water and got caught in a rip, I couldn't touch the ground. Lifeguards saved me.*
- > *Me and my cousin were 10 and at Ninety Mile Beach on our boogie boards when we unexpectedly got pulled out with the outgoing tide. He couldn't swim and the weather turned rough. It wasn't until we were floating away from shore we realised how far out we were. Thankfully our parents got us in before the storm came in worse.*
- > *I was about 3 or 4 or maybe 5, was in a surf beach in Whangarei. Got caught in a rip, was taken out to sea. My dad came out to me, he grabbed a surfer's surf board, and we both kicked ourselves back to shore. After that my mum decided I have swimming lessons. Was the best thing I could have done. #muchneededlessons*