

WAID Scotland 2019 Summary for Water Safety Scotland

Overall Drowning Fatalities

In 2019, there were 96 drowning fatalities in Scotland. Although there had been a downward trend since 2015, the 2019 data shows an increase in overall drowning fatalities and brings the figures back to the same level as they were in 2015 (see figure 1).

Figure 1 also breaks down Water Related Fatalities by cause. 'Not recorded' has seen an increase since last year. 'Accident' and 'Natural Causes' have decreased whilst suicides have sharply increased (see figure 1).

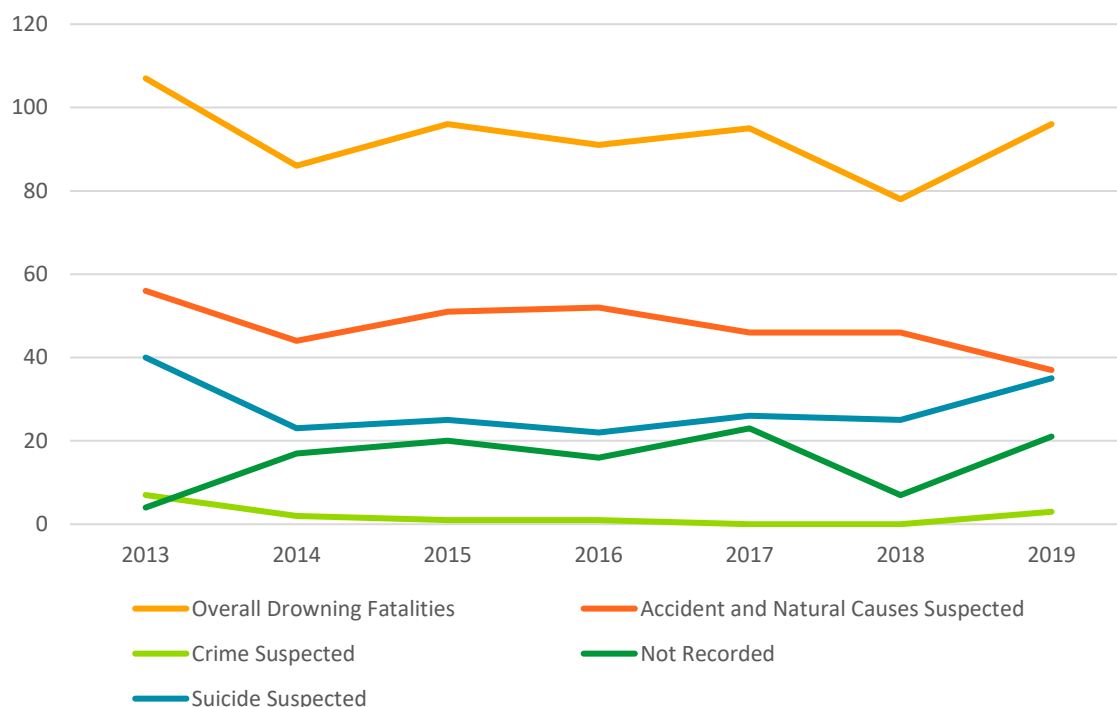


Figure 1: Overall fatalities by year, 2013 - 2019

Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy (SDPS) uses a three year average (years 2013 – 2015) establishing that there are 50 accidental drowning fatalities each year in Scotland and a further 29 suicides. Including crime and 'not recorded' fatalities, this constitutes 97 fatalities on average per year. **The 2019 figures show that overall drowning fatalities have increased since the previous years and are back at almost the same baseline level (see figures 2).**

Year	Overall Drowning Fatalities
Three Year Average (2013 – 2015)	97
2016	91
2017	95
2018	78
2019	96

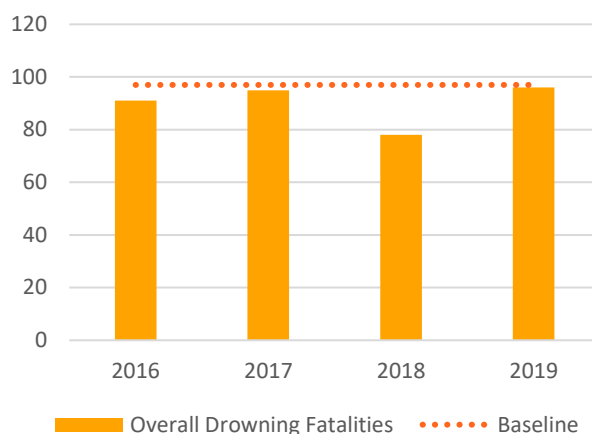


Figure 2: Overall fatalities by year 2016-2018 vs SDPS Baseline (2013-2015)

Suicide Suspected Fatalities

In 2019, there were 35 ‘Suicide Suspected’ Fatalities at or near water in Scotland. This is an increase from last year’s figures and also constitutes a 21 per cent increase in comparison to SDPS three-year baseline.

Year	Suicide Suspected Fatalities
SDPS Baseline	29
2016	22
2017	26
2018	25
2019	35

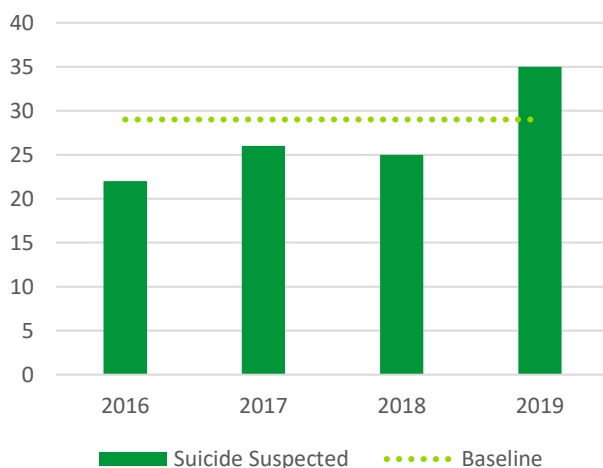


Figure 3: Suicide Suspected Fatalities by year 2016 – 2019 VS SDPS Baseline (2013 – 2015)

Accidental Drowning Fatalities

In 2019, there were 37 accidental drowning fatalities¹ in Scotland. Scotland’s Drowning Prevention Strategy uses a three year average (years 2013 – 2015) establishing that there are 50 accidental drowning fatalities each year in Scotland. The 2019 figures therefore **show a 26 per cent decrease in accidental drowning fatalities** (see figures 4).

¹ Accidental Drowning Fatality refers to accidental and natural cases suspected.

Year	Accidental Drowning Fatalities
Three Year Average (2013 – 2015)	50
2016	52
2017	46
2018	46
2019	37

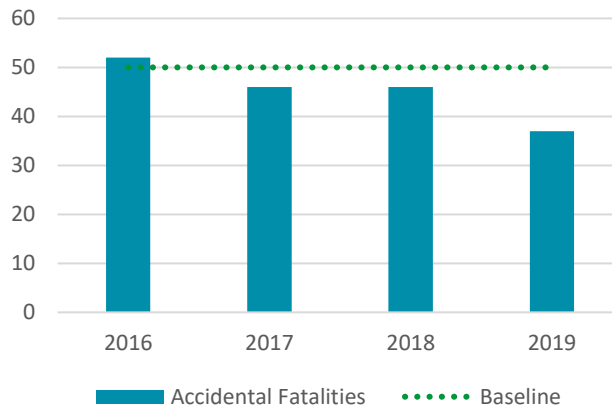


Figure 4: Accidental drowning fatalities by year 2016 – 2019 and average (2013 – 2015)

Key points

In 2019:

- There were 37 accidental fatalities and a further 35 suicides
- 86% accidental fatalities were male
- Males 50 – 59 were the highest group for accidental fatalities (see figure 5)
- 51% of accidental fatalities happened at **coastal waters** (see figure 6)
- Recreational activities, like the previous years, accounted for around 6 out of 10 accidental fatalities (see figure 7)
- 11 accidental fatality reports noted the presence of drugs or alcohol (30%)
- The rate of accidental drowning has steadily come down since 2016 (0.96 per 100,000) to 0.68 in 2019 (see figure 8)
- When considering rates, ages 50 -59 were the highest at risk group (see figure 9)

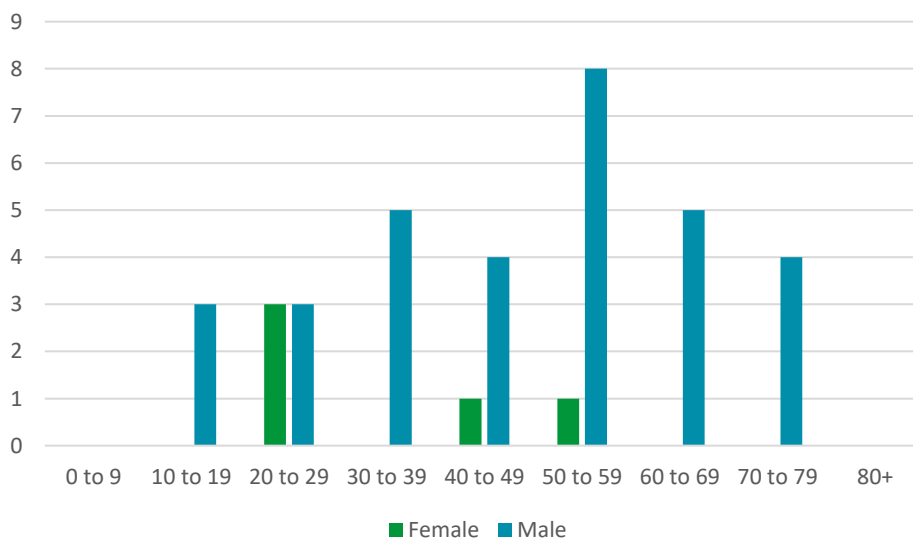


Figure 5: Accidental fatalities by age. N=37

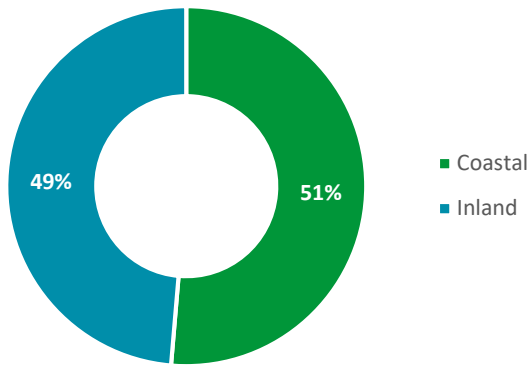


Figure 6: Accidental drowning fatalities by location. N=46

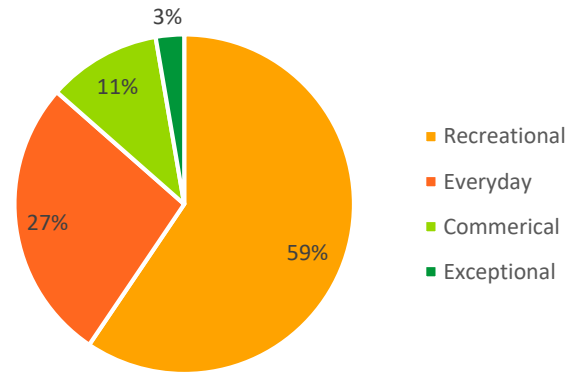


Figure 7: Accidental drowning fatalities by activity. N=46

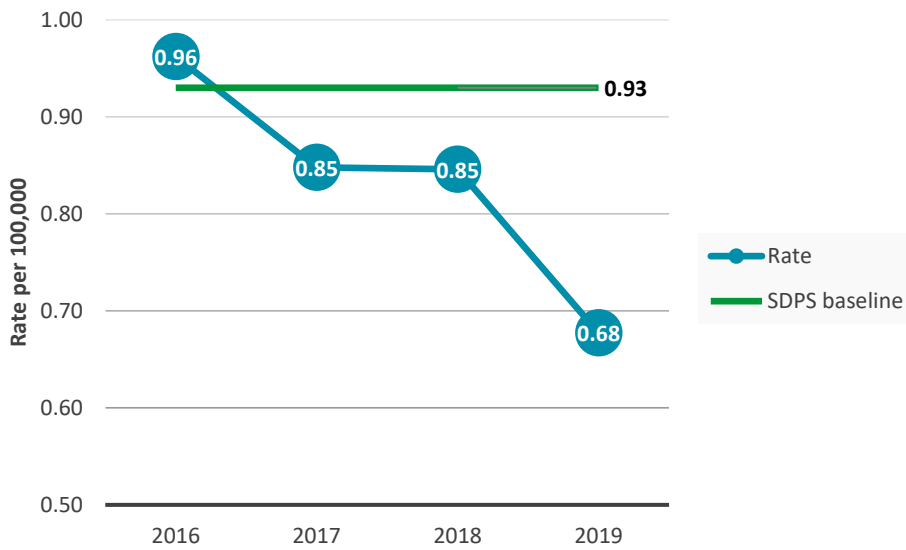


Figure 8: Accidental drowning fatalities by year and rate - 2016 – 2019 and SDPS average (2013 – 2015). Rate based on NRS figures per 100,000

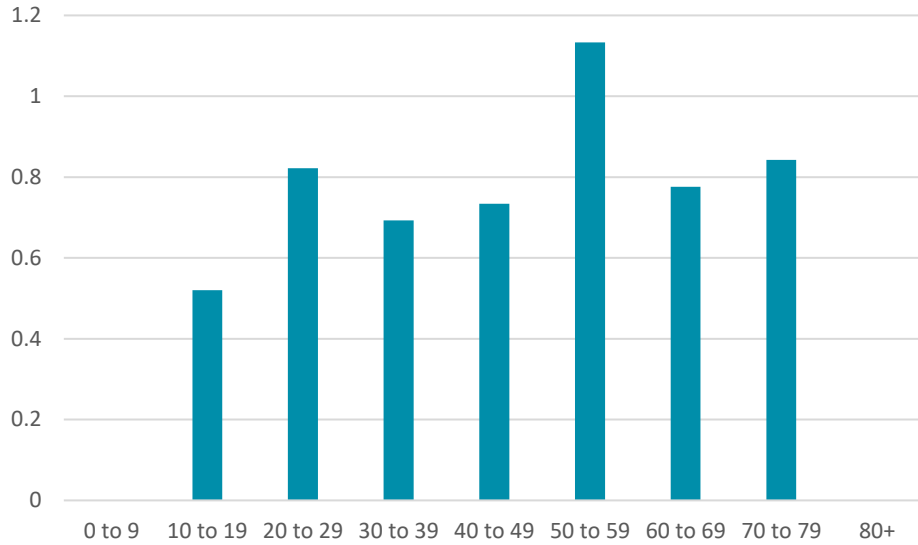


Figure 9: Accidental drowning fatalities by age and rate (based on NRS figures per 100,000)

Notes: Accidental fatalities refers to Accidental and Natural causes. This data analysis is based upon on the official releases of WAID data as found online www.nationalwatersafety.org.uk/waid/reports.asp . It should be noted that the core data providers continue to improve verification and completeness of records starting in 2012 which results in an improved record set.

All rates for population figures are based on NRS figures, published online: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/scotlands-facts/population-of-scotland>