



water safety
Scotland

Terms of Reference

Water Safety Scotland

info@watersafetyscotland.org.uk

Document History

Revision

Date of revision: 04/10/2022

Date of next revision: 05/10/2023

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Reason for changes
11/04/2017	12/05/2016	Updates
24/04/2018	11/04/2017	Updates
23/04/2019	24/02/2018	Updates
24/10/2020	23/04/2019	Updates
16/02/2021	04/02/2020	Updates
04/10/2022	04/10/2021	Updates

Approval by Water Safety Scotland:

Date	Version
12/05/2016	1
07/07/2017	2
05/06/2018	3
04/06/2019	4
04/02/2020	5
05/10/2021	6
04/10/2022	7

Terms of Reference

Name of Group: Water Safety Scotland

Background: The group was established by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) in 2014 in response to a number of drivers and influences including the Paddy Tomkins' *Independent Review of Open Water and Flood Rescue in Scotland*. Initially the group was called 'Scottish Water Safety Reference Group' but later changed its name in June 2015 to Water Safety Scotland.

Purpose: Water Safety Scotland is a voluntary association of organisations and individuals whose main purpose is to understand the risks around water in Scotland and engage with partners to develop a consistent approach to the prevention of water-related fatalities. Water Safety Scotland seeks to influence, coordinate and lead the aims set out in Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy (2018-2026).

Status: Provides advice and support to Scottish Government on matters of water safety and provides a standing network in Scotland to address water safety and drowning prevention

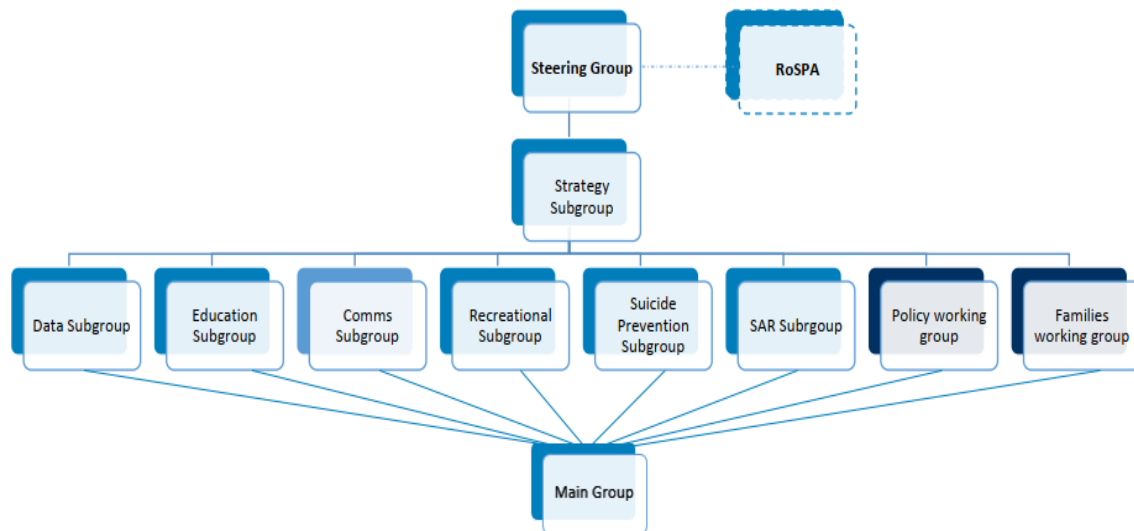
Links: The National Water Safety Forum (UK) and Water Safety Wales (Wales)

Targets:

- Reduce accidental drowning deaths in Scotland by 50% by 2026 and reduce risk amongst the highest risk populations, groups and communities.
- Contribute to the reduction of water-related suicide

Aims of Water Safety Scotland	
1.	Improve fatality incident data and intelligence across Scotland by advocating WAID and sharing WAID reports with partner organisations and local authorities
2.	Drive a generational change to facilitate greater safety education and enjoyment in and around water
3.	Promote public awareness of water-related risks and ensure a consistent message across campaigns and communications
4.	Develop water safety across Scotland's 32 local authority areas and promote the development of water safety policies
5.	Promote the safe participation of recreational activities across Scotland
6.	Contribute to the reduction of water-related suicide.
7.	Improved understanding, learning of resources and capabilities of Search and Rescue (SAR) water-related incidents
8.	Work with families that have been affected by water-related fatalities

Structure



The Steering Group guides the agenda of Water Safety Scotland. Under this, the Strategy Subgroup exists to drive forward the ambitions of Water Safety Scotland and Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy.

All members of Water Safety Scotland collectively sit on the **Main Group**. This group provides the opportunity for individual members to present ideas, initiatives, research and updates on their individual work.

Subgroups (made up of members of the Main Group) also exist to take forward the specific aims and objectives of Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy.

Steering Group

The Steering Group comprises of an Independent Chair, a Vice Chair and the Secretariat. This group guides the agenda of the main group and works to plan and promote the main objectives of Water Safety Scotland

The Steering Group is responsible for Water Safety Scotland. Decisions made must include all three members and are therefore liable in equal proportion. In special circumstances where the Steering Group fails to reach a satisfactory decision or the subject matter requires extra insight, the issue will be presented to the main Water Safety Scotland group for a vote.

The Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the main group every 24 months at the third meeting of the year (usually October), The Chair and Vice Chair role can be held for a maximum of four years. Appendix 1 shows the voting process.

The Secretariat for the group is provided by RoSPA. Water Safety Scotland sits under the auspices of RoSPA. RoSPA holds accountability for Water Safety Scotland.

No organisation (including people, organisations and members affiliated to that organisation who have decision-making capabilities or conflicts of interest) can hold more than one position in the steering group.

Specific tasks for each member can be found in the Roles and Responsibilities governance document.

Strategy Subgroup

The strategy subgroup is made up of the authors of Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy and aims to periodically review the Strategy.

Members of this group are accountable to the Steering Group and meet under the instruction of the Steering Group. The Strategy Subgroup reports to the Steering Group.

Main Group

All members sit on the main group. There are three formal meetings of the main group every year. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of February, June and October (unless otherwise agreed in advance by the Steering Group).

Any items that members wish to be placed on the agenda must be sent to the Secretariat 21 days in advance of the meeting.

The notice of a meeting with agenda and any accompanying papers shall be circulated at least 14 days in advance.

All agendas should follow a consistent framework including:

- Welcome
- Steering Group report
- Minutes from previous meetings, accuracy and Matters arising
- Partner updates
- Date and Time of next meeting

In the absence of the Chair at a meeting, the Vice Chair will take responsibility for the group. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are unavailable, the meeting will be postponed until an appropriate time is agreed.

Subgroups

All subgroups must be approved by the Steering Group.

Each subgroup should elect a Chair and a minute taker. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the subgroup to ensure that minutes and a position table are recorded and sent to the Steering Group for approval. Once approved, the Chair of subgroup should forward the minutes to the members of the subgroup.

Each Subgroup should have a Terms of Reference which has been approved by the Steering Group.

For accountability, a member of the Steering Group will sit on each subgroup. Information on which Steering Group member is represented can be found in the Roles and Responsibilities governance document. If the accountable Steering Group member cannot attend, another member of the Steering Group will attend. If no member can attend - a debrief meeting will be held with the chair of the subgroup and the responsible member of the subgroup.

Templates for the position table, minutes and agendas can be obtained via the Secretariat of Water Safety Scotland.

Membership

Each member organisation is represented by a nominated representative who is responsible for contributing to and attending Water Safety Scotland meetings. If the representative is unable to attend, they should inform the Secretariat. Another representative can attend in their place, but the Secretariat must be notified in advance.

All potential members for any Water Safety Scotland group will be approved by the Steering Group.

Membership follows a specific process which can be found here (see appendix I). Each potential organisation must complete a pro forma with the Chair, Vice Chair or Secretariat. Occasionally, it may be necessary for the Steering Group to seek references for the individual or organisation seeking membership.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be initiated with all multi agency partnership groups. Occasionally, individual organisations may need a Memorandum of Understanding or references if deemed appropriate (or if there is a perceived conflict of interest).

In order to retain full membership (including voting rights), an organisation must attend at least one meeting in a 12-month period. The Secretariat will monitor membership and any member who has not attended in the 12-month period will then be subject to review by the Steering Group.

If it is not possible to attend Water Safety Scotland meetings, updates can be sent to the Secretariat (by email) to be included in the main meeting. This will allow membership but without voting rights.

All members can invite non-members or guests from their own organisation. This is limited to two guests. The Secretariat must be informed of this prior to the meeting.

If a member wishes to leave Water Safety Scotland, they should inform the Secretariat. An exit interview will take place by the Chair or Vice Chair.

Role of members

The role of the members of Water Safety Scotland includes:

- Attendance at meetings
- Providing updates from their own organisations (where appropriate)
- To be an advocate for Water Safety Scotland and Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy
- To contribute to the outputs of Water Safety Scotland and Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy

Accountability of members

All members of Water Safety Scotland must follow specific governance set out in this document and in the following:

- Memorandum of Understanding
- Branding Guidelines and external events guidelines
- Roles and Responsibilities

Water Safety Scotland members are asked to use the Water Safety Scotland brand where appropriate and with the prior agreement of the Steering Group.

All press releases which mention Water Safety Scotland or Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy must be agreed by the Steering Group in advance. There is a full press protocol in Appendix 3 to cover interest from Press.

Branding and logo use

Water Safety Scotland has full branding guidelines that individuals and organisations should adhere to. WSS must pre-approve any proposed use of logo or brand; individuals and organisations should contact secretariat in the first instance.

Working Methods

For clarity, transparency and consistency, all Water Safety Scotland work (including subgroups) must be prioritised in a position table and published on the WSS website. Work found within this position table is recognised as "Water Safety Scotland".

Member's activities not recorded within a WSS position table will not be recognised as part of Water Safety Scotland and Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy reviews.

Sharing of information

All minutes, position tables and information regarding the group and subgroups will be available to members through the website www.watersafetyscotland.org.uk

The Water Safety Scotland website is owned, maintained and updated by RoSPA.

The Member-only section is password-protected.

If group members wish to share something with the whole group, this should go through the Secretariat in the first instance.

Correspondence

Members are encouraged to provide resources and information for upload to the website.

All Water Safety Scotland correspondence e.g. subgroup minutes and invites should include the Secretariat email address.

The Chair of Water Safety Scotland and Chairs of Subgroups may send external letters and emails. Any communications must be approved by the Steering Group and sent via the Secretariat on behalf of the Chair.

Social media is monitored by the Steering Group to ensure information is accurate and appropriate.

Voting

Full members of Water Safety Scotland have voting rights. Organisations will receive one vote. Any individuals not affiliated with an organisation will also receive one vote.

In the case of equality of votes, the issue will defer back to the Steering Group for final decision.

Complaints

If any member wishes to raise a concern, issue or complaint about anything to do with WSS, they should do so via the Secretariat. If the issue involves the Secretariat, the Chair of WSS should be informed. The issue will then be investigated by the Steering Group and a response provided.

Data Access

Water Safety Scotland agrees to only use WAID data which is approved by the National Water Safety Forum.

GDPR: Water Safety Scotland will only use personal data for safety research and accident prevention purposes. Individual or organisational data may therefore be shared with RoSPA and the Steering Group organisations but will **not** be used for any other purpose.

Finances and accountability

All contractual and financial risks are held and managed by RoSPA, on behalf of Water Safety Scotland.

External Representation

The Secretariat should be informed of any invitations to represent Water Safety Scotland. The Chair of Water Safety Scotland is usually the main representative to attend groups such as external bodies and partnerships. This may be delegated to the other members of the Steering Group. All correspondence and information pertaining to documentation and decisions made in relation to external groups will be shared with and reached by the entire Steering Group, and where appropriate the WSS group as a whole.

Where decisions and representation require the input of external organisations or forums, this will have prior agreement by members of the Steering Group. Material relating to the work of WSS and shared with an individual member of the Steering Group must be shared with all other Steering Group members.

Contingency Measures

There are certain circumstances under which contingency arrangements come into force:

- Chair and/or Vice Chair incapacitated or unable to perform normal duties

- Chair and/or Vice Chair resign
- Secretariat incapacitated, unable to perform duties or resigns, or RoSPA withdraws secretarial support
- Chair and/or Vice Chair and/or Secretariat breaches the Terms of Reference or any other governance document
- Member of Water Safety Scotland breaches the Terms of Reference or any other governance document

Contingency arrangements:

Chair and/or Vice Chair unable to honour duties:

- The remaining members of the Steering Group will appoint temporary representation until the Chair or Vice Chair is able to resume.

Chair and/or vice chair resign:

- The remaining members of the Steering Group will appoint temporary representation until a Chair/Vice Chair has been elected by the main Water Safety Scotland group.

Secretariat incapacitated, unable to perform duties or resigns, or RoSPA withdraws secretarial support:

- The remaining members of the Steering Group will appoint temporary representation until a new Secretariat has been decided by the main Water Safety Scotland group.

Chair and/or Vice Chair and/or Secretariat breaches the Terms of Reference or any other governance document

- The remaining members of the Steering Group will investigate the matter. The member under investigation can be present along with a representative from their organisation.
- The outcome of the breach can range in severity from support to expulsion from the group. If the breach is deemed severe by majority vote of the Steering Group, the member will be suspended from Water Safety Scotland until the matter is fully investigated and resolved.

Member of Water Safety Scotland breaches the Terms of Reference or any other governance document

- The Steering Group will investigate the matter. The member under investigation can be present during the investigation along with another representative from their organisation.
- The outcome of the breach can range in severity from support to expulsion from the group. If the breach is deemed severe by a majority vote of the Steering Group, the member will be suspended from Water Safety Scotland until the matter is fully investigated and resolved


Review

This is a live document and will be reviewed annually (as a minimum) for the purpose of continuous improvement.


Any changes that would warrant an early review should go via the Secretariat where the issue will be escalated for the attention of the Steering group. If deemed appropriate, a review will take place.

Appendix I: Election Process

Elections take place every 4 years on the occasion of the third meeting of the year. Notice of positions will be made available to Water Safety Scotland members **6 weeks prior** to this meeting



Interest in positions must be received **28 days prior** to the third meeting



Nominations for positions will be provided **21 days prior** to the third meeting

Appendix 2: Membership Process

Any prospective new member of Water Safety Scotland should be agreed by the WSS Steering Group.

The Chair, Vice Chair or Secretariat will discuss membership with the prospective member and complete a Pro Forma and provide the Secretariat with the following:

- *Logo of new organisation
- *Contact details of the elected representative
- *Photograph of the elected representative for use on WSS documentation and website

The accepted organisation should nominate a representative to attend the meeting and be the main point of contact for membership. This will not apply to individuals who wish to join in a voluntary capacity without any affiliation to an organisation

The prospective member must attend a main WSS group meeting to gain full membership.

Appendix 3: Press interest protocol

Water Safety Scotland

Press interest protocol diagram

All press interest for WSS – must go via RoSPA to: pressoffice@rospa.com
RoSPA, via the WSS Secretariat, then decides the most appropriate person to respond from the following:

WSS Chair

WSS Vice Chair or Secretariat

WSS Comms Subgroup Chair

Steering Group organisation representatives (RoSPA, RNLI, SFRS)

WSS Subgroup Chairs