



COMMONWEALTH  
DROWNING  
PREVENTION

# Annual Report and Accounts 2023

Registered Charity (Charity Commission for England and Wales,  
Charity Number 306094)

Accredited Commonwealth Organisation

Incorporated by Royal Charter

Registered with the Fundraising Regulator

# Drowning

**The process of experiencing respiratory impairment from immersion/submersion in liquid**



The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are 236,000 annual drowning deaths worldwide

50% of these deaths occur among those aged under 30



Drowning is a leading cause of child deaths (1-4 years) and is a top ten leading cause of death for children 1-24 years in every region globally



Half of all drowning deaths in Commonwealth countries occur among children and adolescents (0-19 years), 26% occurring in children in their first five years of life

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KENSINGTON PALACE,  
LONDON, W. 8.

*At the end of the year, I was delighted to see the outcomes from the extensive Strategic Planning consultation process that took place throughout 2023 and I believe the Society now has clear priorities for the next three years. This was the first time that the wider RLSS family had been consulted in this process and we now have a Strategic Plan based on the requirements and wishes of our member organisations. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this plan and to Clive Patrickson and Norman Farmer for leading this important process.*

*I was also pleased to hear of the success of the 2023 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships that were hosted by the Lifesaving Society Canada and their Ontario branch in Windsor, Ontario in September. After a long period during the pandemic without a Commonwealth competition, it was good to see so many teams, athletes and officials taking part in this successful and enjoyable event. We now look forward to the 2025 RLSS Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships that will be held in Swansea, Wales, UK in July 2025.*

*There is much work to be done to deliver our Strategic Plan and this will not be achieved without our members, supporters and volunteers. You each have my grateful thanks for your valuable contributions.*

HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO  
Commonwealth President



## **Message from the Deputy Commonwealth President**

A main focus for the RLSS during 2023 was the review of our Strategic Action Plan. Extensive consultation took place throughout the year with our member organisations on the direction and actions they wished to see us undertake over the coming years. This cumulated in a series of meetings and workshops held in Canada in September, where the final input was reviewed, and the new plan was adopted by our Board of Trustees at their December meeting. I would like to thank everyone involved in this process, this has been the most consultative we have been as a Society, and I believe we now have a plan for 2024 to 2026 that will address our member organisations needs to grow and develop.

It was wonderful to travel to Windsor, Ontario for the 2023 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships. This was our first face to face meet up since 2019 and it was a great opportunity to see friends and colleagues once again. As with previous Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships, there was great competition and friendship amongst all those taking part and we were thrilled to see so many officials make the journey to ensure the event ran smoothly. Thank you to everyone involved and to the Lifesaving Society Canada and their Ontario Branch for hosting such an excellent event.

I was delighted to attend the World Conference of Drowning Prevention in December. This was an opportunity to meet representatives from many of our members organisations and to learn from them and the huge number of expert speakers. Congratulations to our member, Royal Life Saving Society Australia and their co-host on an excellent event

In November, we said goodbye to Jo Hepburn, our Operations Assistant after 8 years working for the Society. Jo has been a great support to Emma and myself during her time with us and she will be missed. As a Headquarters team we rely heavily on the work of volunteers, many of whom lead various themes of our strategy plan, and I send my sincere thanks to them all for everything they do for the Society. We certainly would not achieve all that we do without their support.

2024 will be an exciting year for the Society as we transition to our new strategic plan and I look forward to working with our volunteers, colleagues and supporters to achieve our goals.

**Clive Holland**  
**Deputy Commonwealth President**

## Royal Patronage

While this report was being prepared, we received notification that the recent review of the Patronages of The late Queen had been concluded and that His Majesty, King Charles III had accepted the Patronage to the Royal Life Saving Society.

This is wonderful news and we are honoured and grateful to His Majesty for his support. It also confirms that every reigning monarch since 1904, including Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II who was our Patron for over 70 years, has been the Patron of the Society.

His Majesty is no stranger to the RLSS having, as Prince Charles, achieved his Bronze Medallion



## Charity Information and Overview

Registered Name:	The Royal Life Saving Society
Working Names:	RLSS, RLSS Commonwealth, Commonwealth Drowning Prevention, Commonwealth Lifesaving
Registered Charity:	Charity Commission England and Wales, Charity Number 306094
Accredited Commonwealth Organisation	
Registered with the Fundraising Regulator	
Registered Address:	Red Hill House, 227 London Road, Worcester, WR5 2JG, United Kingdom
Patron:	HM Queen Elizabeth II until September 2022 HM King Charles III from May 2024
Commonwealth President:	HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCMG
Deputy Commonwealth President:	Clive Holland
Treasurer:	Clive Patrickson PhD
Portfolio Directors:	Norman Farmer AM ESM <i>Executive Director</i> Anne-Maree Gardiner AM <i>Director of Lifesaving Sport Development</i> Dr Aminur Rahman DCM PhD <i>Director for Drowning Prevention</i> Dr Shayne Baker OAM DProf <i>Director of Organisational Development</i> Becky Lehman <i>Director of Education and Training</i>
Operations Manager:	Emma Harrison
Operations Assistant:	Jo Hepburn until November 2023
Society Bankers:	Lloyds Bank, PO Box 1000, BX1 1LT
Independent Financial Examiner:	Richard Oddy FCA
Honorary Legal Advisor:	Alastair Collett

# RLSS Board of Trustees



**Chair**  
Clive Holland



**Treasurer**  
Clive Patrickson PhD  
*Appointed Trustee for Strategy from September 2023*

## Elected Trustees

### Asia Pacific



Pene Snashall  
Australia  
*(Treasurer from September 2023)*



Geh Thuan Tek  
Malaysia



Sanath Wijayarathne  
Sri Lanka

### Europe & Africa



Cavell Burchell  
United Kingdom



Dylan Tommy  
South Africa



Job Kania  
Kenya

### Canada & Caribbean



Robert Clark  
Canada



John MacFarlane  
Jamaica



Jonathan Bruce  
St Lucia  
*(also holding the Youth Portfolio)*

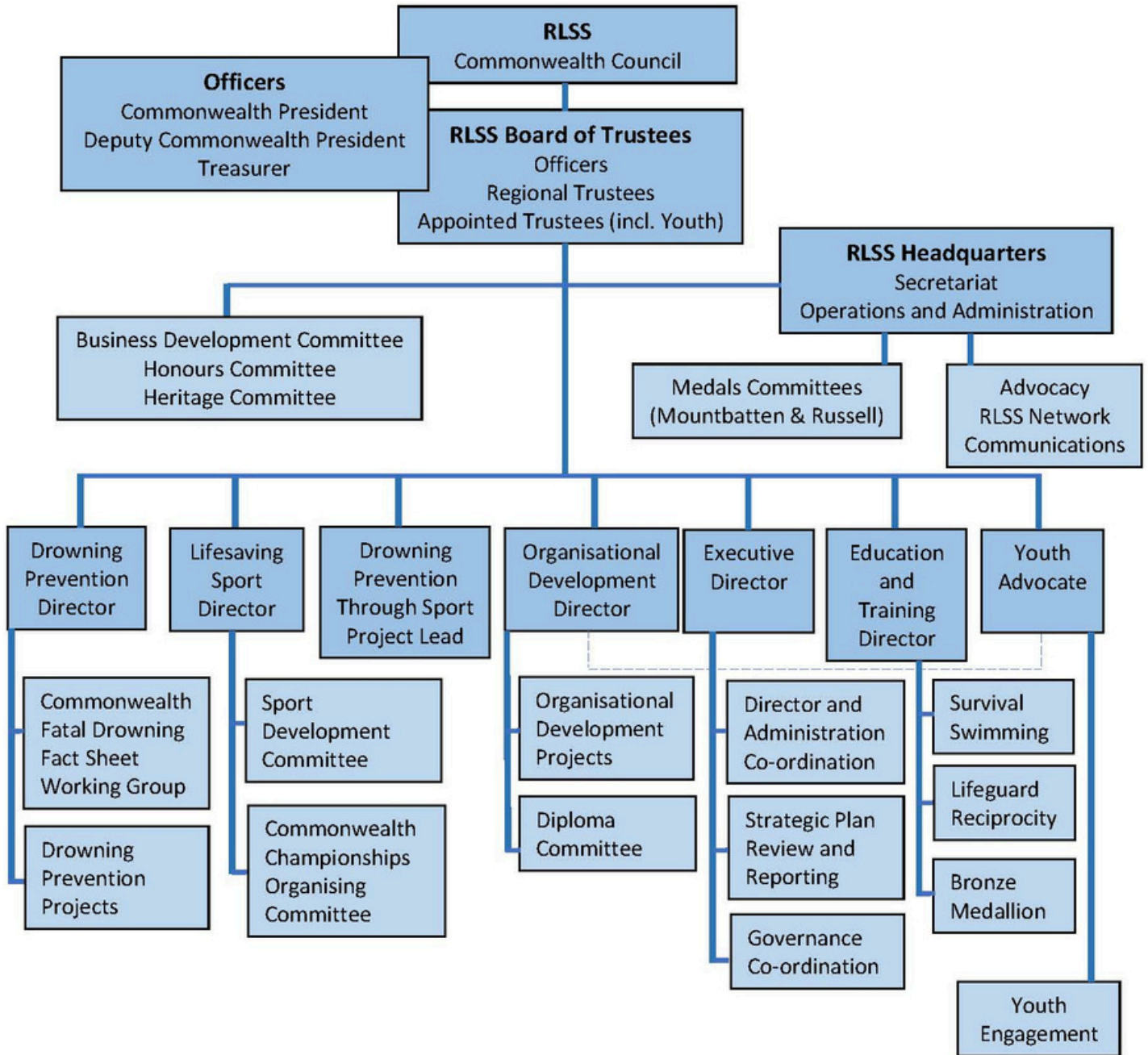
## Appointed Trustee



Dr Stephen Beerman  
*Director for Advocacy*  
Canada

Trustees are appointed or elected in accordance with our Regulations to be representative of the range of our network. All Trustees have participated in an induction programme to acquaint them with the responsibilities of trustees and update them on current aspects of our work

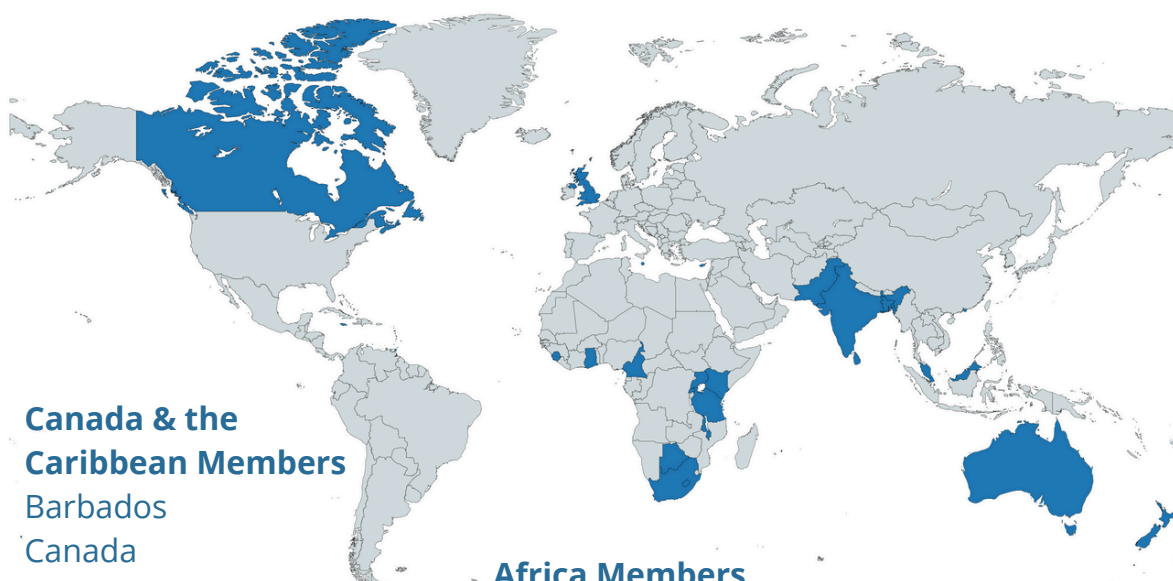
# Governance



# Our Members

## Europe Members

- Cyprus
- Gibraltar
- Malta
- United Kingdom



## Canada & the Caribbean Members

- Barbados
- Canada
- Cayman Islands
- Jamaica
- St Lucia
- Trinidad & Tobago

## Africa Members

- Botswana
- Cameroon
- Ghana
- Lesotho
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Mauritius
- Rwanda
- Sierra Leone
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Uganda

## Asia Pacific Members

- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Brunei
- Hong Kong
- India
- Malaysia
- New Zealand
- Pakistan
- Singapore
- Sri Lanka

## Our Charitable Purpose

The Royal Life Saving Society provides public benefit as a charity through reducing drownings and the impact of drownings in the community across the Commonwealth.

Our Trustees have complied with their duty in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 to follow the Charity Commission's guidance on the operations of this public benefit

### Our Mission

Commonwealth Drowning Prevention

### Our Vision

No person in the Commonwealth should drown

### Our Motto

**Whomsoever you see in distress, recognise in them a fellow human being**  
*Quemcunque Miserum Videris Hominem Scias*

### Our Scope

#### "Drowning Prevention"

All activities that contribute to the saving of life in, on and near water

#### "Commonwealth"

All nations that are recognised at any given time by the Commonwealth Secretariat including overseas territories, protectorates and dependencies that are recognised at any given time by the Commonwealth Games Federation



## Our Values

### Family

We are a Family with common heritage and values that works to achieve our mission through a common drowning prevention bond



### Working Together

The Society is 'Our' organisation, and our strength comes from sharing and working together

### Mutual Respect

We will embark on our tasks with honesty and mutual respect for the skills, knowledge and experience that we all bring



### Learning

We will foster a commitment to curiosity and continual learning to help us in achieving our tasks

### Inclusion

We will include and embrace organisations and personnel throughout the Commonwealth in achieving our missions



## RLSS Positioning Statement

RLSS will facilitate drowning prevention, lifesaving and lifesaving sport activity under the brand of The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS). The RLSS will also foster and facilitate exchanges and sharing between RLSS Members and Companion Organisations

# Strategic Priorities 2020-2023

## Active Membership

### *Member Relations*

We will coordinate information and data on the activities of all member organisations  
We will facilitate the building of capacity in those member organisations seeking assistance  
We will facilitate engagement with youth from all RLSS member organisations

### *Drowning Prevention Development through Sport*

We will implement a lifesaving “sport for all” programme which facilitates broad participation for all Commonwealth nations. This will be a pathway towards Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships participation.

### *Virtual International Lifesaving Sport for Development*

We will implement a sustainable lifesaving sport opportunity that focuses on inter-organisational level pool competitions held locally and with international comparability of results.

## Pool Lifeguarding

We will implement a Commonwealth wide qualification reciprocity program for pool lifeguards in enrolled Commonwealth countries. This program will provide a membership program of benefits for lifeguards that comes as standard with pool lifeguard qualifications

## Advocacy, Partnerships & Collaboration

### *Drowning Prevention Advocacy*

With a clear consistent message, we will position drowning prevention to a range of decision makers throughout the Commonwealth, including the Commonwealth Secretariat, governments and international organisations.

### *Drowning Data, Information and Evidence*

We will understand drowning burden in the Commonwealth as the foundation for our advocacy and capacity building actions.

## Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships

We will organize Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships biennially that enables inclusiveness and engagement.

# Our Achievements 2023

## Survival Swimming for disadvantaged communities in South Africa

In 2022, through the generous support from Speedo International the first phase of the survival swimming project was delivered in disadvantaged communities and schools across four provinces in South Africa. In 2023, the second phase of the programme, once again sponsored by Speedo International, focused on the instruction of new facilitators and the sharing of the programme with the National Education Departments took place.

Given that the training was offered online, facilitators from Botswana and Mauritius were also able to participate and it is hoped that they can roll out survival swimming programmes within their countries.

In addition to this training, a pop up event took place to the rural Mogwase community where 200 children from 4 schools had a day of fun activities teaching water safety and survival swimming.



## World Drowning Prevention Day 2023

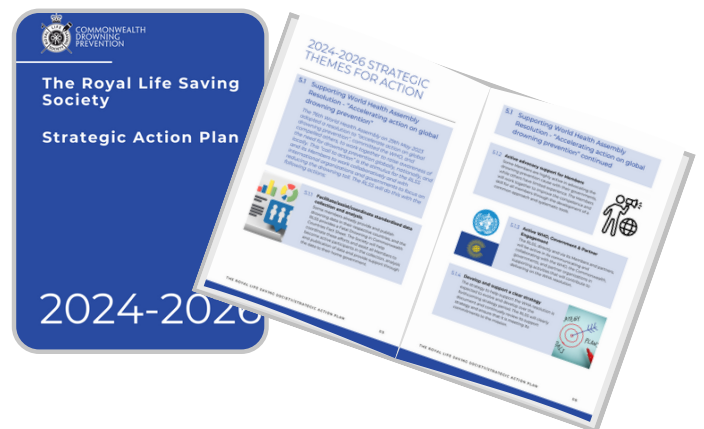
In advance of, and to mark World Drowning Prevention Day 2023 on 25th July, the RLSS hosted, in collaboration with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution an event at Marlborough House, home of the Commonwealth Secretariat, aimed at raising awareness on Accelerating Action on Global Drowning Prevention. RLSS and RNLI representatives delivered presentations on drowning prevention imperatives and Dr David Meddings, Drowning Prevention Lead at the World Health Organisation (WHO) presented on WHO drowning prevention initiatives.



Other presentations were made on behalf of the Centre of Injury Prevention and Research Bangladesh, The Black Swimming Association and UNICEF. This high-level briefing event aimed to secure understanding and awareness and encourage increased action on drowning prevention amongst Commonwealth Stakeholders. The event was well attended by staff from various High Commissions and Government offices in London, along with representatives from organisations who support the work of the RLSS and RNLI, and those who work within the drowning prevention community.

### Strategic Planning for 2024 to 2026

Throughout 2023, we conducted various consultations with our Member Organisations, Directors and Trustees on a new Strategic Action Plan for 2024 through to the end of 2026 which was adopted by the RLSS Board of Trustees at their December meeting and can be found at <https://www.rlsscommonwealth.org/rlss-about/what-we-do/>



### Lifeguard Reciprocity Project

Back in 2020, a project was launched to look at a RLSS certification transferrable between RLSS members and since then much work has taken place between our larger member organisations which included a mapping exercise comparing each countries pool lifeguard programme against the others to identify competency gaps in awareness and knowledge items. The working group for this project has been meeting regularly online but it was agreed that in-person testing would be the final stage in determining how to provide a benefit to individual members wishing to transfer to another RLSS member country to work as a pool lifeguard.





A Practical Workshop was held in Perth on 3 December 2023 with members of the working group present. The session was extremely successful but some differences between countries were noted.

The work of this group was also presented at the World Conference on Drowning Prevention (WCDP) 2023 in a presentation titled "Cross-Border Recognition of Lifeguard Certifications - RLSS Lifeguard Reciprocity Project".

Going into 2024, the working group will continue to assess any gaps or similarities that were identified at the Perth workshop and make adjustments to their pre-learning and in-country assessment and then the next phase will be to test the processes by the receiving countries.

### Lifesaving Sport for All

In 2022 a Lifesaving Sport for All Guide was produced that builds on survival swimming education and provides an introduction to lifesaving sport at a community level. During 2023 this Guide was piloted in Cameroon and Kenya and it is intended that this Guide will be formally launched in mid-2024.



### WCDP 2023 Scholarship

Early in 2023 we launched a scholarship programme for a young person from one of our member organisations to attend and present at the World Conference on Drowning Prevention (WCDP) in Perth, Australia in December 2023. The scholarship was awarded to Geh Cheow Mei from Malaysia who made a presentation titled 'A study to assess the public knowledge on climate change which is linked to drowning in Malaysia'.



## RLSS Programmes Review

### *Survival Swimming Guide*

A review of the RLSS Survival Swimming Guide and its underpinning knowledge and skills has continued, building off the learnings from the Survival Swimming Workshop organised by the RNLI and WHO and held in Zanzibar in September 2022. The Workshop outputs released during 2023 included the following resources for low resource settings.

- Toolkit to assist practitioners to develop Emergency Action Plans for basic swimming and water safety skills lessons.
- Toolkit to assist practitioners to implement informed consent procedures for basic swimming and water safety lessons.
- Toolkit to assist practitioners to identify and audit suitable sites for basic swimming and water safety lessons.

It is anticipated the updated RLSS Survival Swimming Guide will become available in mid-2024.

### *Review of Bronze Medallion*

The Bronze Medallion Review Working Group has continued their detailed investigations and discussions to ensure the RLSS Bronze Medallion and its resources remain relevant as a programme that teaches the community how to respond in a variety of water rescue situations. The focus has been on developing water rescue knowledge, water proficiency skills, physical fitness, and decision-making judgment skills. It is anticipated the updated Award Guide and Instructor Handbook will be released in the second-half of 2024.



## Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships 2023

The 2023 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships were hosted by the Lifesaving Society Canada, and their Ontario Branch, at the Windsor International Aquatic & Training Centre, Windsor, Ontario in September and were sanctioned by the International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF).



173 athletes participated in the Championships from Australia, Canada, England, South Africa, Wales, India, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Hong Kong, Kenya and Singapore. In addition, the Lifesaving Society Ontario branch supported a Caribbean delegation of 4 female athletes, 3 from Jamaica and one from the Cayman Islands.

The overall results for the Championships in both the National and Development Team competitions were:

- 1st Australia
- 2nd England
- 3rd South Africa

The Langland Bay Cups, awarded to the highest point scoring male and female athletes, were Callum Brennan and Chelsea Jones, both from Australia.

Mrs. William Henry Cup, which is awarded to an individual from a developing lifesaving sport nation, who is identified through a culmination of points scored, and participation and engagement during the Championships, was presented to Varun Chavan from India.



## Other Notable Achievements

### *Advocacy*

To further the Commonwealth Drowning Prevention messaging, in March 2023 RLSS adopted a guide to RLSS Advocacy Key Messaging outlining its commitment to United Nations (UN) and World Health Assembly (WHA) resolutions on global drowning prevention and implementing their recommendations

### *2023 World Health Assembly Resolution 'Accelerating Action on Global Drowning Prevention'*

RLSS has been actively supporting the implementation of the WHA Resolution, adopted by the World Health Assembly on 29th May 2023 along with the 2021 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution on Global Drowning Prevention

### *Global Alliance for Drowning Prevention*

The RLSS submitted an Expression of Interest for the Global Alliance for Drowning Prevention in June 2023 and although unsuccessful we were delighted that two of our member organisations, RLSS Australia and the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research Bangladesh were recognised for their outstanding record of achievement to the global drowning prevention effort by being selected to the inaugural and interim Global Alliance for Drowning Prevention The RLSS has offered its support to both organisations and to the WHO.

### *Global Status Report on Drowning*

The RLSS is also supporting the WHO and its quest to develop a global status

on drowning report by linking our member organisations with relevant WHO regional offices and departments/ ministries of health in their country.

### *Member Outreach*

RLSS and RLSSUK supported a joint outreach activity with the Royal Life Saving Society Malta to assist in the development of life support and first aid training for local police, naval and uniformed cadet and scout groups

Lifesaving Society Canada continued its lifesaving development outreach activities in the Caribbean with training in Antigua, Jamaica and Cayman Islands

During May, RLSS Australia, in cooperation with the Life Saving Society Malaysia, organised and delivered a Southeast Asia Drowning Prevention Capacity Building workshop for ASEAN nation government and NGO representatives including RLSS member organisations.

Our members, and our Youth Advisory Group were also active on World Drowning Prevention Day 2023 with a broad range of events and promotional activities.

### *Content Management System (CMS)*

During 2023 we have developed a content management system that will be a platform for us and our members to share resources and information. We are currently testing this platform with a selection of our member organisations and will formally launch it to our members during 2024.

### *Honours*

Higher Society Honours awarded in 2023:

#### ***Honorary Life Member***

Cynthia Cakebread – Canada

Sheila Polard - Canada

#### ***Honorary Life Governor***

Rick Stilling – Canada

Patrick D'Almada - Canada

### *RLSS Diploma*

The RLSS Diploma recognises significant contributions to our life saving knowledge. It is one of the Society's oldest and most prestigious international awards. The RLSS Diploma is awarded to individuals and teams, who have added to our knowledge in way that can save lives and prevent drowning. During 2023 we received three nominations for the Diploma which are currently under review by our Honours reviewers.

## RLSS Awards and Medals

### *2022 Mountbatten Medal*

On 27th August 2022, 13-year-old Kalya Kandegoda Gamage was spending time with his family on remote Chrystalls Beach, south of Dunedin, New Zealand. He was paddling at the shoreline with his younger brother Kithmi, aged 11, when a large wave crashed into Kithmi and caused him to lose his footing. Two more waves followed in quick succession, and Kithmi was pulled out into the water. A confident swimmer himself, Kithmi treaded water and made several attempts to get back to shore, but he was tiring and being carried further away. At this point Kalya turned to his mum and said 'OK Mum, I'm going out. I might not be back' and then he dived into the waves, which on that day were approximately 3 metres high. By now Kithmi was approximately 60 metres from the shore, and becoming very cold, as the water temperature was about 10 degrees. Kalya drew on the RLSS lifesaving training he had undertaken in his home country of Sri Lanka, and swam out and rescued his brother, and managed to get him back to shore before the emergency services arrived.



One of the local police commented afterwards that no one survives in that stretch of water, it is notoriously dangerous. Undoubtedly, Kalya's brave response saved his brother's life that day.

For his brave and selfless actions, Kalya Kandegoda Gamage was awarded the 2022 Mountbatten Medal at a presentation held at Kalya's school, at which the Mayor of Clutha read an opening address, and Marie Baker and Judi Jessop from RLSS New Zealand presented Kalya with his award. The assembly was also attended by representatives from the local Police, Fire and Ambulance services, who attended the rescue on the day, and the rescue Helicopter Otago made a special landing in the school grounds.



### *2022 Russell Medal*

On 23rd April 2022, Noah Winders, an RLSS UK Lifesaving Award holder, was attending a basketball training session at St. Vincent's School in Dublin, Ireland.

During a training drill, one of Noah's fellow athletes was seen to stumble, then collapsed and appeared to be having a seizure. He was unresponsive, and the Senior Coach on duty placed him into the recovery position and arranged for an ambulance to be called. The casualty's condition appeared to change, and what appeared to be agonal gasps were identified by Noah. Following a request by the ambulance despatcher, Noah began chest compressions on the casualty. The casualty appeared to regain normal breathing, so CPR was stopped. The casualty's breathing then stopped again so Noah re-commenced chest compressions until an ambulance arrived on scene, and the paramedics began treatment. His condition stabilised and he was transferred to hospital, to be discharged several weeks later. The casualty has since made a full recovery.

At just 15 years old, Noah responded with courage in a very difficult situation, and worked confidently as part of the team that saved the casualty's life.

For his courageous actions, Noah Winders was presented with the 2022 Russell Medal at a ceremony held at the home of British Ambassador to Ireland, Paul Johnston.



## RLSS Headquarters, Governance and Administration

We have continued to develop our internal processes and policies and continually monitor our risk management.

During 2023, the RLSS continued to improve its governance and systems by reviewing and updating our Regulations, reviewing the Risk Register on a quarterly basis and a range of policies that has included:

- Staff Expenses Policy
- Volunteer Expenses Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Conflict of Interest and Confidential Information Policy
- Whistle Blowers Policy
- Anti-corruption, Fraud and Bribery Policy
- Sustainable Asset Pool – Reserves Policy
- Employee Recruitment and Remuneration Policy

Following guidance from the UK Charity Commission during 2023 we created and adopted a Social Media Policy.

RLSS recognises the impacts of climate change on Commonwealth Drowning Prevention and is committed to environmental sustainability. As such, RLSS has adopted a Position Statement on Environmental Sustainability in December 2023.

Our Board of Trustees meets quarterly via electronic format, while in September it met face to face in Windsor, Canada immediately following the 2023 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships. Also during September, we held a biennial meeting of the Commonwealth Council.

The Business Development Committee, made up of the Chief Executive Officers from our four larger Members have met periodically during 2023 to discuss various matters and offer advice to the Trustees. Our Membership Committee continue to meet quarterly to review various membership issues and consider new membership applications. The Society's Portfolio Directors meet quarterly to update on the progress under their activity within our Strategic Action Plan

## Collaboration

Drowning is a complex public health problem which goes without recognition or attention in many areas of greatest need. Indeed, it has been called a hidden epidemic. There are more 'at risk' populations in the world needing drowning prevention assistance than there are organisations focused on providing help. The RLSS Commonwealth drowning prevention mission needs collaboration from all national, regional and international organisations and governments to be most effective – cooperating fully for the benefit of people worldwide to reduce the global burden of drowning. Strong partnerships are key to achieving our aim of eliminating drowning in the Commonwealth and have enabled us to support our Member Branches in low resourced settings.

The 2023, key partnerships for RLSS included:

The **Commonwealth** is a voluntary association of 56 independent countries that are united by values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter.

RLSS, as an Accredited Organisation to the Commonwealth, continues to engage with various groups within the Commonwealth such as the Independent Forum of Commonwealth Organisations (IFCO) and the Commonwealth Children's Interest Group (ComCIG).

We also applied for and received endorsement for the 2023 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships as an official Year of Youth event.

The **World Health Organization** (WHO) WHO Global Status Report on Drowning: RLSS has actively supported the WHO through engagement with members and supporting them in their in-country collaborative efforts.

The **International Life Saving Federation** (ILS) Both RLSS and RLSS Member Branches are represented on the ILS Board and on the ILS Commissions and Committees, strengthening opportunities for effective collaboration.



The Commonwealth



We continue to collaborate with the **Royal National Lifeboat Institution** (RNLI) and maintain regular dialogue of matters of mutual interest. Having hosted the pre WDPD 2023 event jointly with the RNLI, we hope that this will become an annual activity to engage with Commonwealth stakeholders based in the UK.



#### *RNLI/WHO Workshop*

RLSS assisted the RNLI/WHO Basic Rescue and Resuscitation Workshop that was held in Pune, India in October 2023. Our member, Rashtriya Life Saving Society India hosted the event and workshop facilitators from the RLSS included Dr Shayne Baker, Australia, Mr George Makasare, India and Ms Mei GEH from Malaysia



**Speedo International** - The second phase of a project in South Africa using funds from Speedo took place during 2023 and we continue to administer the Speedo Small Grants Programme



RLSS is most grateful for the ongoing support from **Laerdal Medical**. In 2023 we focused on the development of our content management system that will support all our members through resource sharing.



**Laerdal**  
helping save lives

During 2023 we established a relationship with **Ruth Lee Limited** who have kindly donated rescue manikins to six of our members: India, Sri Lanka, Kenya, South Africa, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. These manikins will be shipped in early 2024.



A project was initiated between **Navarino**, a leading maritime technology partner, Laerdal Medical and RLSS that will see approximately 350 CPR manikins delivered to our members across all three regions during 2024 to enable expansion of CPR education.



And most importantly, our **RLSS Member Branches** continue to work at the national and community level to reduce drowning through:

- Researching drowning and aquatic emergencies to inform practice.
- Targeted community-based Drowning Prevention projects.
- Training the community and professionals in lifesaving skills for prevention & emergency response.
- Engaging young people in lifesaving and drowning prevention.
- Using the sport of lifesaving to further develop skills and techniques for rescue.
- Monitoring and risk assessing aquatic environments to guarantee safe participation in safe aquatic environments.
- Several of our Members carry out outreach work in nearby countries which widens the impact of our organisation

## Acknowledgements

The Society's achievements would not have been possible without the support of and contribution from the following people who have given their time and expertise.

### Portfolio Directors

- Norman Farmer AM ESM – Executive Director
- Anne-Maree Gardiner AM – Director of Lifesaving Sport Development
- Dr Aminur Rahman DCM PhD – Director for Drowning Prevention
- Dr Shayne Baker OAM DProf – Director of Organisational Development
- Becky Lehman – Director of Education and Training
- Rhonda Young-Pilon – Youth Advocate

### Committee and Working Group Chairs

- Clive Patrickson PhD – Business Development Committee
- Robert Clark – Heritage Committee
- Dr Colleen Saunders – Diploma Committee
- Dr Christopher Love – Honours Committee
- Dr Stephen Beerman – Advocacy Steering Group

Our Committee and Working Groups are composed of members from Australia, Canada, India, Lesotho, Malaysia, Malta, South Africa, St Lucia and the UK and we are extremely grateful to all the members for their valuable contributions.



## Our Plans for 2024

We will have effective and efficient administration systems that support the Society's operations and activities.

This will be achieved through:

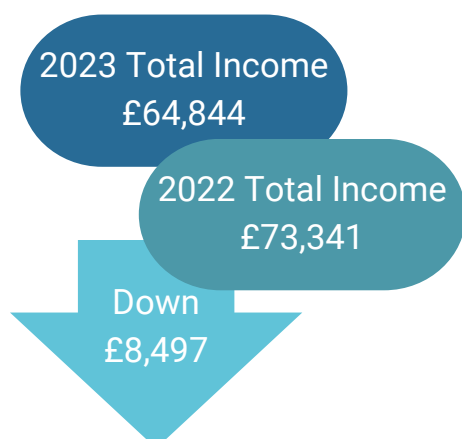
- Operating a Headquarters with good practice business systems and staffing within our means and supported by volunteers and others to ensure the Strategic Action Plan is implemented.
- Having a system of honours, used in all Member organisations, to recognise the valuable contribution by the volunteers.
- Administering and support the committees and working groups that the Board considers necessary from time to time including Heritage, Diploma and the provision of awards.
- Exploring multiple ways of working together as a family, embracing large, medium and small member organisations.
- Develop our communications strategy to include staying up to date with latest communication channels that use real time and online technology.

### Specific Plans for 2024

- To commence the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan 2024 to 2026 which includes the recruitment of Directors who will be responsible for various strands of the plan.
- To appoint a new Board of Trustees for the term 2024 through to 2026 and the creation of additional non-voting Board Member roles.
- To launch the content management system to our members and provide training and assistance to ensure all members utilise and benefit from the platform.
- To launch the Lifesaving Sport for All, a programme of lifesaving sport events based on skills education, which will include webinars and online materials.
- To pilot the Lifesaving iSport, which are inter-organisations (eg, club, provincial or national teams) level pool lifesaving competitions held during pre-determined dates at aquatic facilities throughout the year where the performances of competitors are compared with other lifesavers – all without travelling outside their local community.
- To complete a review of the competition rules for Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships and commence planning for 2025 event alongside RLSS UK as host.
- To continue to support World Drowning Prevention Day and encourage and assist our members to contribute to the work of the WHO.
- To produce and launch the second Commonwealth Fatal Drowning Factsheet.
- To support the Youth Advisory Group that meets regularly to ensure youth engagement in drowning prevention interventions and RLSS programmes and governance.

# Financial Summary

## Income



As with previous, years, much of the RLSS's income is member payments from the three largest members branches (Australia, Canada and the UK).

We will continue to look at diversifying income streams and funding opportunities.

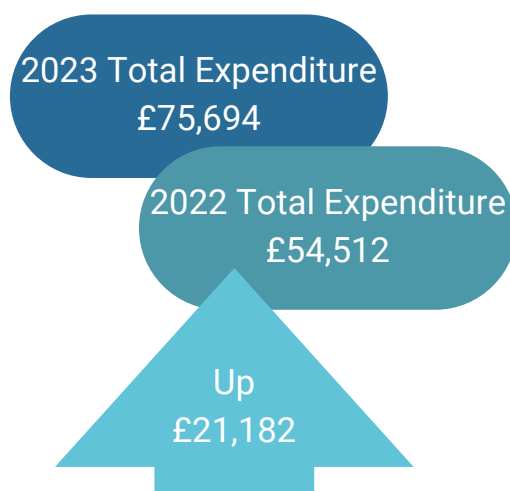
Our largest branches have made commitments to continue to support the administration of the Society, allowing any raised funds to be spent on programmatic activity.

## Expenditure

Most RLSS expenditure finances the valuable work of RLSS Headquarters (staff and running costs).

Expenditure was higher than normal given that we were funding the Strategic Planning Workshop in Windsor and covered costs of attendance for some Trustees and Portfolio Directors to ensure broader input into the process; costs relating to the Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships; the initial set up costs for the Content Management System; costs relating to the second phase of the Lifesaving South Africa Survival Swimming project; and, the final payment towards digitizing our archive (a project started in 2022).

In December 2022, the Board had approved a deficit forecast for 2023 given that the Society has built up reserves over the last few years.



## Donors & Funders 2023

The Royal Life Saving Society wishes to thank the following individuals and organisations for their most generous donations, sponsorships and grants during 2023

The Privy Purse in remembrance of Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II

The Edinburgh Trust

RLSS UK

The Lifesaving Society Canada

Laerdal Medical

Royal Life Saving Society Australia

Clive Holland

## Reserves Policy

RLSS has a Reserves Policy aimed at ensuring the financial sustainability of the Society. As at the end of 2023, we had £70,681 of general reserves and this meets the Society's Reserves Policy of two years core funding (excludes project work)

Over recent years RLSS has managed to increase its financial reserves through the continued contributions from major branches, increased contributions from member organisations, grants and sponsorships and good fiscal management. This allowed us to offer reduced membership fees to our members who were struggling financially during the pandemic and beyond.

In 2022 we set up a Regional Development Fund that is to support regional work carried out in conjunction with our major branches. The total amount in this fund, and our other designated and restricted funds totals £65,065 at the end of 2023.

The Board of Trustees approved the 2024 forecast at their December 2023 meeting given the current value of the Society's general reserves.

## Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

### In relation to the following financial statements of the Royal Life Saving Society to year end 31 December 2023

In accordance with the Charities Act 2011, the Trustees have prepared the following Financial Statements which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year 2023 and of its financial position as at 31 December 2023. In preparing these Financial Statements, best practice has been followed and suitable accounting policies have been consistently applied.

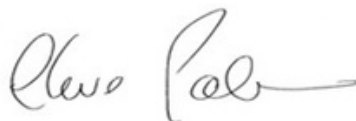
Applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" 2005 have been followed.

The Financial Statements have been independently examined by Richard Oddy FCA after he was given access to all relevant financial documents, general correspondence and Minutes of all Society Committee meetings.

Signed on behalf of the Society Trustees



**Clive Holland**  
**Deputy Commonwealth President**  
31st December 2023



**W Clive Patrickson PhD**  
**Treasurer**  
31st December 2023





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# Financial Statements

For the year ended  
31st December 2023

**Report to the trustees of The Royal Life Saving Society and to the Commonwealth Council**

**On accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 December 2023 as set out on pages 3 and 4.

**Responsibilities and basis of report** As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent examiner's statement** I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Richard Oddy FCA

Date: 03 June 2024

# Royal Life Saving Society

## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	01/01/2023	To	31/12/2023
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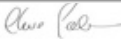
### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Membership	43,308	-	-	43,308	43,771
Sponsorship	12,000	-	-	12,000	24,000
Donations and Legacies	7,533	-	-	7,533	3,891
Resource Income	517	-	-	517	1,190
Reimbursable expense	-	-	-	-	31
Gift Aid	-	-	-	-	249
Dividends/Interest	1,485	-	-	1,485	210
<b>Sub total (Income for AR)</b>	<b>64,844</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64,844</b>	<b>73,341</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>64,844</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64,844</b>	<b>73,341</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Charitable Activities	25,227	-	-	25,227	23,206
Commonwealth Development	33,568	5,100	-	38,668	18,881
Commonwealth Headquarter Costs	6,761	-	-	6,761	9,592
Lifesaving Sport Development	4,228	-	-	4,228	-
Membership Development	152	-	-	152	2,468
Support Services	144	-	-	144	144
Finance Charges	513	-	-	513	220
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>70,594</b>	<b>5,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>75,694</b>	<b>54,512</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>70,594</b>	<b>5,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>75,694</b>	<b>54,512</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>(5,750)</b>	<b>(5,100)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(10,850)</b>	<b>18,829</b>
A5 Transfers between funds	1,495	(1,495)	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	133,239	13,359	-	146,597	127,768
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>128,983</b>	<b>6,764</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>135,747</b>	<b>146,597</b>

# Royal Life Saving Society

For the period from	01/01/2023	To	31/12/2023
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## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Cash at bank	128,983	6,764	-
	<i>Total cash funds</i>	<b>128,983</b>	<b>6,764</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details			
	None	-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Quoted investments			
	Royal Life Saving Society Fund	Unrestricted	-	3,631
	Russell Medal Fund	Restricted	-	10,394
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	None	Unrestricted		
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Clive Holland	6th June 2024	
		W Clive Patrickson	6th June 2024	





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