



The Royal Life Saving Society

Advocacy Plan 2022¹

CONTACT:

The Royal Life Saving Society
Commonwealth Headquarters
Red Hill House, 227 London Rd,
Worcester WR5 2JG,
UNITED KINGDOM

Tel: +44 (0)1789 774229
Fax: +44 (0)1789 773995
Email: commonwealth@rlss.org.uk
Website: <http://www.rlsscommonwealth.org>

Attention: RLSS Board of Trustees and RLSS Business Development Committee

¹ The RLSS Advocacy Plan will start in 2022 and will be reviewed/updated in 2023, to align with the RLSS Strategic Plan. The framework structure will provide the template for improvements to this dynamic RLSS Advocacy Plan.

Section 1 – Mission, Vision and Scope

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

Our Scope

“Drowning Prevention”

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

Section 2 – 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 Organizations.

Section 3 – Our Values

Consistent with the principles outlined in its Royal Charter, Mission, Vision and Motto, and the Charter of the Commonwealth, the RLSS shall undertake its activities in accordance with the following 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' organization, 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 organizations and personnel throughout the Commonwealth in achieving our mission

***Important Note:** The idea of a RLSS lifesaving "family" involves member organizations being encouraged to participate in collaborative activities and engage in helping and sharing with others. As a result, member organisations are encouraged to participate in activities, initiatives, and programs across the Commonwealth.*

Section 4: Advocacy Plan 2022

Scope/Purpose:

To elevate awareness and support by the Commonwealth of Nations leadership² for drowning prevention, lifesaving, and youth leadership training through the work of the RLSS and its members.

To strengthen the RLSS contributions within the global drowning prevention effort.

² The Inter-governmental Commonwealth leadership is:

- a. the Commonwealth Secretariat, <https://thecommonwealth.org/about-us/secretariat>
- b. Commonwealth Foundation, <https://commonwealthfoundation.com/>
- c. Commonwealth of Learning, <https://www.col.org/>
- d. Commonwealth Games Federation, <https://thecgf.com/>

Key Strategies:

Providing clear messaging to support RLSS drowning prevention activities

Utilizing the UN Resolution on Global Drowning Prevention

Building partnerships with aligned organizations

Advancing the RLSS Friends Network

Strengthening the connections arising from the RLSS Royal Charter

Capacity building:

The Advocacy Plan framework will be useful to inform action decisions.

Advocacy activity expansion will recruit new resources, skills, and collaborations.

Impact assessment and evaluation of advocacy activities will be done to build knowledge and capacity.

The Tasks:

Providing clear messaging to support RLSS drowning prevention activities:

1. Conduct and/or partner in a range of advocacy events, campaigns and initiatives that progress drowning prevention issues across the commonwealth, globally, regionally and nationally through our members and key stakeholders.
2. Promote and facilitate the collection, analysis, and dissemination of fatal and non-fatal drowning data by Commonwealth countries to tell the stories of drowning burden and prevention success.
3. Create and disseminate drowning prevention factsheets that outline key drowning prevention issues, including drowning burden, prevention measures, research themes, and global, regional, national and local strategies.
4. Develop and disseminate evidence and stakeholder informed key messages that cover commonwealth nation drowning burdens, the need for multi-sectoral collaboration and urgent local action.

Utilizing the UN Resolution on Global Drowning Prevention:

1. Amplify and disseminate the UN resolution amongst membership and Commonwealth entities.
2. Encourage members to review how they can contribute to national efforts to respond to voluntary actions, and engage, drive and contribute to national or regional activity.
3. Support and actively commemorate UN World Drowning Prevention Day on July 25th annually. (Including dissemination of information materials/core messaging to members, collective voice /representation role with global partners and to document these activities and the impacts)
4. Investigate and map the relevant alignments that the RLSS has with the Commonwealth Charter, Commonwealth Foundation, UN Resolution on Global Drowning Prevention, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Building partnerships with aligned organizations:

1. Undertake a partnership review of key drowning prevention organisations, for example, with UN Key Agencies, governments, academic institutions, industry, and NGO sector.
2. Evaluate and select potential partnerships that align with the RLSS Vision, Mission and Strategies for maximum impact.
3. Invest effort to advance two of the selected strategic partners.
4. Expand to further collaborations using learning from the first identified partnerships.

Advancing the RLSS Friends Network:

The purpose of the RLSS Friends Network is to share information and inspire engagement in RLSS activities. Recognizing that drowning prevention, RLSS capacity and youth leadership development will be improved with collaboration and engagement of role models, mentors and knowledge keepers and that sharing and exchange are important values and tools for education and growth:

1. Develop the RLSS Friends Network (refer Appendix).
2. Include past and present leaders from the RLSS, Commonwealth, Government, High Commissioners, staff and volunteer from aligned organizations, industry, academics, investors, and donors.
3. Include organizations and entities that will add value through collaboration and sharing.
4. Invest to create the RLSS Friends Network and provide a regular communication channel / route that is helpful to the RLSS and the RLSS Friends.

Strengthening the connections arising from the RLSS Royal Charter

The RLSS Royal Charter is a governance document, that brings Patronage, Presidency, prestige, and recognition which can be used in Commonwealth countries³, to advance the RLSS mission.

1. Engage Board appointed contributors to explore opportunities for elevated awareness, acknowledgement of achievements, connections with governments and intergovernmental agencies
2. Identify, based on willingness, availability and impact assessment, appropriate engagement with Royal connections in RLSS and RLSS Member Organisation activities, and then conduct targeted communication and lobbying.
3. Accepting the beneficial impact of Commonwealth President and Royal Patronage, continue to brief and engage them in RLSS activities and in succession planning activities where possible and appropriate.
4. Consider existing or new honours and innovative awards that would be suitable for the Commonwealth President and Royal Patronage participation in the form of communication, presentation or titling.
5. Induct the Commonwealth Council, Board of Trustees, volunteer Directors, and staff in RLSS advocacy biennially such that they become lead ambassadors for RLSS.

Definitions:

Advocacy: is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions. Advocacy includes activities and publications to influence public policy, laws and budgets by using facts, their relationships, the media, and messaging to educate government officials and the public.

Aligned organizations: in this context can be defined as sharing a common vision of drowning prevention, lifesaving, and youth leadership training.

Strategy: a plan of action or policy designed to achieve a major or overall aim.

Task: is an activity that needs to be accomplished within a defined period of time or by a deadline to work towards a strategy or goal.

³ Commonwealth countries are supported by a network of more than 80 intergovernmental, civil, cultural, and professional organizations. The RLSS is one of the accredited non-governmental organizations that supports Commonwealth countries, drowning prevention and youth leadership development activities.

References:

RLSS Strategic Plan 2021-2023

RLSS Supplementary Charter and Bylaws - <https://www.rlsscommonwealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2018-Supplemental-Charter-and-Bye-Laws.pdf>

RLSS Regulations - <https://www.rlsscommonwealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/RLSS-Regulations-ISSUE-8-10.06.2020.pdf>

Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan -

https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/CommonwealthSecretariatStrategic_Plan_17_21.pdf

WHO Global Report on Drowning (2014) - <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/global-report-on-drowning-preventing-a-leading-killer>

WHO Drowning Prevention: An Implementation Guide (2017) -

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/preventing-drowning-an-implementation-guide>

UN Resolution on Global Drowning Prevention - [HTTPS://UNDOCS.ORG/EN/A/RES/75/273](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/273)

RLSS Fatal Drowning in Commonwealth Countries Factsheet (2020) - https://www.rlsscommonwealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/RLSS_Commonwealth_Drowning-Data-Factsheet_FINAL_Feb2020-LR.pdf

Prepared by: RLSS Advocacy Plan Development Working Group – Sept to Nov 2021

Steve Beerman - Chair (RLSS Trustee)

Serena Bakina (Cameroon)

Suparna Sahajwalla (India)

Deidre (Lauren) Hall (Jamaica)

Norm Farmer (RLSS Hon. Executive Director)

Clive Holland (RLSS Deputy Commonwealth President)

Clive Patrickson (RLSS Hon. Treasurer)

Justin Scarr (RLSS Business Development Committee)

Emma Harrison (RLSS Operations Manager)

Gemma May (International Advocacy Manager, Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) – invited partner)

Appendix

Terms of Reference - RLSS Friends Network -

Friends are connectors, accelerators, mentors, investors, leaders, learners, inspiring and inspired to share knowledge that will advance awareness and activities for Commonwealth Drowning Prevention.

Friends can be people, organizations, government agencies, industry, academics and/or civil society leaders.

Friends will be connected by interest and the desire to add value to the work of the RLSS in drowning prevention, lifesaving, and youth leadership training.

Friends will receive key update and progress communication reports 2 times per year.

Friends may be asked to assist with connections, knowledge sharing, alignments, advice, education, inspiration, and mentorship, occasionally.

Friends will be invited to the RLSS Friends Network and can withdraw if they wish.

The RLSS Friends Network will require an honorary/volunteer chair and some staff support for communication.

The Role Description for the RLSS Friends Network Chair or Portfolio (honorary/volunteer)

To report to the Advocacy effort within the RLSS Board of Trustees.

To facilitate and coordinate the activities outlined in the RLSS Advocacy Plan, RLSS Friends Network Strategy.

To make recommendations to update the RLSS Advocacy Plan, RLSS Friends Network Strategy, when needed.

To provide leadership by seeking opportunities for the Friends Network to add value to the work of the RLSS.

To provide or determine a process to provide leadership chairpersons for activities within the RLSS Friends Network.

To ensure that a communication is sent to the RLSS Friends Network on a regular basis.

To utilize social media as an efficient and connecting tool to share knowledge with the RLSS Friends Network.

To provide leadership to the content and timing of communications to the RLSS Friends Network.

To recommend and welcome invitees to the RLSS Friends Network.

To ensure that new invitees have some orientation to the RLSS, the RLSS Strategic Plan and Advocacy Plan.

To keep a register of the RLSS Friends Network and to thank those who complete their contribution to the RLSS Friends Network.