

RLSS UK - Life Changing Event II

Trainer's Guide

This guide is to assist trainers in delivering the five sections of the DVD. Each section is designed to be delivered separately. Section Four has 2 modules and Section Five has 3 modules. There are therefore a total of 8 possible training modules to deliver.

It is recommended that a discussion takes place with staff at the conclusion of each module.

The DVD has the following objectives:

1. A training tool for managers, lifeguards, supervisors and all staff working in swimming pools.
2. To reinforce to staff the danger of complacency and the long term impact of a tragedy, whether or not they are culpable.
3. To reduce the risk of drowning.

Section 1 - Light, Water and Pool Supervision

Approximate Length: 8 minutes

Developed and delivered by Terry Allen of QLM Ltd, this module provides practical guidance for lifeguards and managers on the dangers of glare and reflection to pool supervision and how to minimise the risk.

a) Messages for the trainer:

- At the beginning of the section we show that even with pool water of excellent clarity disturbance of the surface can distort the image of a casualty beneath the water. This is an important point for lifeguards to grasp, as in terms of supervision the window of opportunity to identify someone in trouble may be limited to the short surface struggle. Therefore, scanning must be an active continuous process – beware daydreaming. If you have a leisure pool with water features you can pause the DVD and discuss any areas within supervision zones where turbulence of water may mask someone beneath the surface. At the very end of this section, you can see how even a simple waterfall feature can hide a manikin.
- For specular reflection and glare, we suggest the trainer ask lifeguards if, where and when either of these two phenomenon occur. With year round experience of working the pool, they should have seen all lighting conditions. Remember, surface reflection may come from overhead pool lights.
- This whole section is designed to make lifeguards more aware of their working environment.
- Refer to Section 1, Element 3 of the RLSS UK publication, 'The Lifeguard' for more information on Swimming Pool Supervision techniques.

b) Discussion points:

- i. Discuss the impact of glare at your pool and whether the lifeguards can see the entire bottom of the pool all the time. Discuss controls and contingency measures.
- ii. Discuss communication channels to report shortfalls in visibility.

Section 2 - Real Life Rescues

Approximate Length: 15 minutes

The material in this module has been kindly provided by Poseidon Technologies, specialists in drowning detection technology.

All the persons rescued in the 10 clips made a full recovery.

It is not possible to be precise as to the various reasons each person got into difficulty, but our observations are as follows;

1. Adult – rescued by lifeguard. Note the nearby swim teacher does not see the casualty.
2. Child- weak swimmer rescued by Lifeguard.
3. Child- weak swimmer rescued by lifeguard
4. Adult- may be cardiac arrest, rescued by another swimmer.
5. Adult- underwater blackout. Note the person swimming underwater and body position on blackout. Rescued by another swimmer.
6. Adult- rescued by another swimmer.
7. Child- weak swimmer rescued by lifeguard
8. Adult- possible cardiac arrest as swimmer is seen stopping in the pool. Joint rescue between swimmers and lifeguard.
9. Adult- cardiac arrest, rescued by other swimmers.
10. Child- weak swimmer rescued by lifeguard

a) Messages for the trainer:

- One option is to run this section as 10 clips, briefing staff at the beginning.
- The second option is to show the clips one at a time and discuss the scenario.
- Ask staff to try and identify which one appears to be a hyperventilation (under water black out), which one looks like a heart attack.
- Highlight how the body behaves under water when on the bottom i.e. often not still with some movement.
- Identify with the group how easily and quietly people slip under the water, with apparently little struggle. Some will have done their struggling when their head was clear of the water.
- It should be noted that some of these pools are not lifeguarded at the time.
- The time taken to rescue is real time and it appears to be a long time.

- Do not get into a debate about the merits of technology.

b) Discussion points:

- i. Discuss the types of drowning and the underlying causes from what you can see, e.g. weak swimmers, heart attack, black out.
- ii. Discuss how a body behaves under water.

Section 3 - Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Interview

Approximate Length: 33 minutes

Following a drowning the Police will investigate to establish if a crime has been committed. In some cases this may include interviewing suspects under PACE (The Police and Criminal Evidence Act).

Such an interview in reality would take hours. This is an edited version.

The interview is shown in three sections:

Section One: "Police Caution and No Comment" - In this section, Ian Stephen Dodds is cautioned and has taken the "no comment" approach. This results in the interview being terminated. Starts at 1.56 minutes

Section Two: "The Lifeguard's Evidence" – Having taken further legal advice (realising the risk of a "No comment" approach), the lifeguard provides his version of event. Starts at 8.08 minutes.

Section Three: "Witness Evidence and Police Challenge" – In this section witness evidence is presented to the lifeguard, challenging and contradicting his version of events. Starts at 21.15 minutes.

a) Messages for the trainer:

- This is a fictitious scenario.
- The drowning of Luke Perry has occurred at 'Ledley Swimming Pool'. The pool is 25m long x 12m wide. Two lifeguards are on duty in a public session of around 30 to 40 bathers.
- The drowning occurred at around 3.45pm. The pool was open for public swimming. One lane rope is in for lane swimmers. It is school holidays.
- Police are investigating. This is a much edited version of a PACE interview, with one of the duty lifeguards who is suspected of not being on station and distracted.
- The Lifeguard (Ian Stephen Dodds) is being interviewed under caution on suspicion of manslaughter.
- Police are investigating in order to determine if there is sufficient information for a manslaughter charge to be brought.
- The key message for trainers is that whether or not the lifeguard is actually charged is not the issue. The key point is do you want to be in that position?

- The lifeguard throws in a number of allegations about the pool operator. None of the allegations are true, but are used as an attempt to deflect from his own culpability.
- It becomes established that there is strong witness evidence that the lifeguard was away from his allocated supervision zone at the time of the drowning.
- Don't become too concentrated on the story itself: it's about the experience that staff go through of being interviewed under caution.
- In this scenario, it is unlikely there would be sufficient evidence for a manslaughter charge.
- But, the Enforcement Authority (either the Health and Safety Executive or the Local Authority Environmental Health Department) would follow up after the police investigation. In this scenario there may be sufficient evidence for the lifeguard to be charged under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.
- This would lead to a trial (probably some years after the incident) and if convicted a criminal record. The punishment would most likely be a fine. Sentencing guidance allows for a custodial sentence and fine or fine.

b) Discussion points:

- i. What is your view of the evidence you have just heard? Has a lifeguard got a case to answer?
- ii. In what respects did the lifeguard fail in his duty of care?
- iii. What would you do differently if you were being interviewed by the police or the Enforcement Authority? Key areas to emphasise are the need to be honest, clear and candid with responses.
- iv. How do you prevent being in this situation?

Sections 4 and 5 - A Life Changing Event

Module 4 interviews two staff involved in a drowning in Scotland in a busy leisure pool.

Interview one is with Michael (Duty Officer). Approximate interview length 19 minutes.

Interview two is with Sammy (Operations Manager). Approximate interview length is 14 minutes

Module 5 interviews three staff involved in a drowning in North Yorkshire. The pool is a 25m x 10m pool with a small play pool, wave machine and a separate waterslide.

Interview one is with Tom (Lifeguard). Approximate interview length 8 minutes

Interview Two is with Holly (Duty Officer). Approximate interview length 11 minutes

Interview Three is with Paula (Centre Manager). Approximate interview length 28 minutes

The staff provide their recollections of the event, their feelings then and feelings now and the impact it had on them

a) Messages for the trainer:

- Both drownings took place in public sessions.
- Investigations by the enforcement authorities identified no case to answer.
- In one case (North Yorkshire) the 8 year old boy was probably just obscured by other bathers' legs. In the other case (Scotland) the 15 year old boy may have suffered a fit going down a waterslide and slipped into the water unconscious and unnoticed.
- The training message here is that all staff involved have long standing memories of the incident and the effects.
- Trainers should not discuss the scenario itself, but to look at the emotions and the impact on the individuals.
- It is important to bring out with staff their feelings with regard to how such an incident would affect them emotionally.

b) Discussion points:

- i. Discuss staff impressions of the interviews and how they would deal with being in the same position.
- ii. Emphasise the possible long term impact on individuals with direct involvement in a tragic event.
- iii. The permanency of the event in the memory is something which, regardless of blame, will be present.
- iv. Discuss how risk can be reduced at your pool.