



20 October 2014

For Immediate Release

This is a joint statement by Director Water Safety Council (Fiji) Ltd and the Commissioner of Police.

Water activity is part of our culture, let's put safety first this November to April!

In accordance to the World Health Organisation, drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional injury death worldwide, accounting for seven per cent (7%) of all injury related deaths. Children, males and individuals with increased access to water are most at risk of drowning.

The Water Safety Council (Fiji) Ltd is a not-for-profit organisation that is working across government departments and agencies (including education institutions; sporting bodies) and the private sector to reduce the drowning toll in and around Fiji.

It was officially established in 2014 following a series of stakeholder engagements at local, national and international levels.

Fiji Police Force's function section five of the Fiji Police Act: The protection of life and property of the people in Fiji.

November to April accounts for 71 per cent of our country's drowning's because we're not keeping watch of our toddlers, children, friends and family when we're in and around rivers, creeks and the ocean.

With the increase in temperatures, daylight and rainfall, so too is our tendency to be in the water – are you with a friend? Remember, if you can't see them they can't see you.

In accordance to statistics kept by the Fiji Police Force, from 1 January until today 20 October, 36 drowning's have been reported.

- 75 per cent male, 25 per cent female
- 30 per cent are those aged between 17 and 35 years of age
- 19 per cent are those aged six years and younger

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Drowning is Preventable

Commissioner of Police Major General Ben Groenewald said

“Children are the responsibility of their parents. Do you think it is an easy task for the police to criminally charge a parent for negligence after they lost a child? Keep infants under the proverbial wing of a hen and know the whereabouts of all your older children. Your children are your responsibility.”

Director Water Safety Council of Fiji Litiana Loabuka said “Men aged 22 – 37 years of age have already accounted for 27% of this year’ drowning’s.

“REMEMBER to reported to the turagani koro BEFORE and AFTER you go diving

“ALWAYS dive with a buddy

“Check the weather forecast – listen to the radio before you go out, and

“Always dive with a spotter.”

Do you take part in water activity, particularly swimming, diving, fishing and snorkelling in the Western Division? Be save and swim together with your friends, check the water movement and depth before entering and learn CPR.

Litiana Loabuka and Police Commissioner said “Let’s work together to champion a lifestyle change in water safety measures through a collaborative, educational and research-driven approach on drowning prevention.”

KEEP WATCH
DROWNING IS PREVENTABLE

END

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