



20 April 2020

William Doolan
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne, VIC, 3000

200 The Boulevard
Port Melbourne VIC 3207
PO Box 353
South Melbourne DC VIC 3205

Tel (03) 9676 6900
Fax (03) 9681 8211

mail@lifesavingvictoria.com.au
www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au

ABN 21 102 927 364

Dear Mr Doolan,

Investigation into the death of Yik Sua Hong

Please find below Life Saving Victoria's (LSV's) response to the recommendation directed to our organisation outlined in Coroner Caitlyn English's Finding without inquest into the death of Yik Sua Hong. Court Reference: COR 2017 005638, COR 2018 000135, COR 2018 000569, COR 2018 000641, COR 2018 006486, COR 2019 001061, COR 2019 004141.

Recommendation 1:

"...that Life Saving Victoria work with the Victorian Government and other related water safety organisations to continue to educate and increase education among Victorians and the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community regarding the dangers of rock-fishing and relevant safety initiatives to reduce risk..."

Life Saving Victoria's mission is to prevent aquatic related death and injury in all Victorian communities, and the vision that all Victorians will learn water safety, swimming and resuscitation, and be provided with safe aquatic environments and venues. Rock fishing safety is one of the key safety elements included in our current education programs to Victorians including those individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Our commitment to rock fishing safety is demonstrated in the following ongoing activities:

- Rock fishing messaging, as part of general water safety messaging provided by LSV's CALD Department, has been conveyed in classroom/community education sessions attended by members of Victoria's CALD community since 2012/13. Over 100,000 CALD community members received this information from 2012/13 to 2018/19.
- Development of a CALD Virtual Reality Google Expedition with two of the scenes focusing on safe fishing (one specifically on rock fishing). The Victorian Fishing Authority has been consulted on this project.
- Rock fishing safety messaging is also included in the Victorian Government's Play it Safe by the Water public safety campaign. This includes messaging via through social media channels and across various partner websites.

In addition, in 2012, LSV commenced a three-year state-wide public awareness campaign targeting rock fishers from CALD backgrounds. This campaign was funded through the then Department of Primary Industries Recreational Fishing Grants Program and supported by VR Fish and Fisheries Victoria. The key messaging delivered throughout this campaign included safety measures, such as wearing lifejackets, to preserve life.

Prior to the rock-fishing campaign there were on average 1.2 rock fishing drowning deaths per year. During the campaign period there were no rock fishing drowning deaths and in the 4 years post campaign there was only 1 drowning, however more recently at the end of 2019 there were 2 reported rock fishing deaths. Therefore, rock fishing safety campaign messaging needs to continue as important reminders to the existing and new fishing community.

As a non-profit organisation Life Saving Victoria relies on funding for our programs and therefore has applied for a grant through the Victorian Fishing Authorities Recreational Fishing Grants Program to expand the reach of rock fishing safety messages. The proposed project will support a state-wide grassroots campaign to educate the recreational fishing community on how to enjoy and participate in fishing while observing appropriate safety measures to avoid injury or loss of life. It aims to build on the previous campaign through inclusion of grassroots community-based ambassadors and development of marketing collateral that can be distributed through social media channels, as well as community events and fishing forums.

LSV is committed to the prevention of aquatic related death and injury and will continue to work collaboratively with the coroner, the Victorian Government and other related water safety organisations to continue to educate and increase education among Victorians and the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community regarding the dangers of rock fishing to reduce risk and prevent deaths of a similar nature occurring.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Mr Hong's family.

If you or any of your team have any questions in relation to the above, please do not hesitate to contact Dr Bernadette Matthews, General Manager & Principal Research Associate by phone 03 9676 6976 or email bernadette.matthews@lsv.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Taylor', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Nigel Taylor, ESM
Chief Executive Officer
Life Saving Victoria