



# WORLD CONFERENCE ON DROWNING PREVENTION 2011

VIETNAM  
10-13 MAY

*Building a global platform to reduce drowning*

## MEDIA RELEASE

### AUSTRALIA TAKES LEAD IN REDUCING CHILD DROWNING IN ASIA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**12 MAY 2011**

DANANG, THURSDAY: Four hundred delegates representing 50 countries are attending the World Conference on Drowning Prevention to share key research and to build a global platform to reduce drowning. The conference has a specific focus on the child drowning epidemic in Asia where approximately 300,000 children drown every year.

Royal Life Saving Society – Australia, organisers of the conference, has been making significant inroads into drowning prevention in the region and creating valuable partnerships across Asia.

“Australians have a great affinity, knowledge and skills that make drowning prevention second nature to most,” said Justin Scarr, Chief Operating Officer of Royal Life Saving Society – Australia and convener of the World Conference on Drowning Prevention.

“Swimming and water safety education, the science of placing barriers to water and the need for supervision, while commonplace in Australia, are not in many communities across Asia. By working with our partners across the region we are having a direct impact on communities with high rates of drowning,” he said.

Key research presented at the conference has shown the effectiveness of simple solutions like creating safe environments, educating families and teaching children to swim. The need to scale up these interventions and continually raise awareness to the issue of child drowning is imperative to the success of the conference.

“The true impact of the World Conference on Drowning Prevention will be measured in the action that follows. There is an urgent need for global, regional and community action to eliminate the epidemic of drowning. Australians are known to punch well above their weight, and our hope is that this event, delivered with Australian government support will trigger other governments, NGOs and donors to join us in taking steps to reduce drowning,” Mr Scarr said.

**For all media enquiries please contact:**

**Matthew Smeal – [msmeal@rlssa.org.au](mailto:msmeal@rlssa.org.au)**

Mobile: +84 1258 128 308

(From within Vietnam: 01258 128 308)

**Justin Scarr – [jscarr@rlssa.org.au](mailto:jscarr@rlssa.org.au)**

+ 61 408 434 011