



**ROYAL LIFE SAVING**  
AUSTRALIA

## Cultural Diversity and Drowning Prevention Report Foreword

Following the release of the *10 Year National Study of Overseas Born Drowning Deaths*, Royal Life Saving Society – Australia engaged Beasley Intercultural to undertake qualitative research to increase our understanding of Australia’s culturally diverse populations and to fill in the gaps from the report relating to behaviour and attitudes that may be leading to drowning among these high-risk communities. Beasley Intercultural is an independent research company with experience conducting research and training relating to multicultural communities in across Australia and internationally.

The focus was on key populations identified as being most at risk from the research; Chinese, Korean, Indian, Vietnamese and newly arrived migrant African communities.

The aim of the research was to gain an in-depth understanding of the water safety knowledge, attitudes towards water, cultural beliefs and participation (or lack of) in aquatic activities through case studies of Australian migrants.

This study also incorporated a brief overview of key examples within the drowning prevention sector to address drowning and water safety for multicultural communities, and identified gaps that may inform future direction of drowning prevention strategies for this high-risk population.

### Key findings

- *People from multicultural backgrounds and overseas visitors are often less familiar with water safety precautions*
- *Many elements of drowning prevention require customisation to maximise participation among multicultural communities*
- *Good practice in maximising multicultural participation facilitates inclusion and participation*

***Please see the accompanying report for detailed findings, including case studies of people from migrant backgrounds.***

## Implications for the Industry

### 1. *Understanding migrant perspectives of swimming and water safety*

- Of the people interviewed, most personally knew of someone who drowned
- Perception is that swimming is important for children to learn, not so much for adults
- The cost of lessons is challenging for many families
- People do not pay attention to safety messages until something happens like a drowning, leveraging off personal experience/stories may help get the message across
- Bondi Rescue was commonly cited by participants as how they receive water safety messages
- Community profiles provide a good overview of the demographics of key migrant populations

### 2. *Policy Level*

- Strategies need a long term approach - it takes time to implement and see desired outcomes
- Consider incorporating drowning prevention education as part of a broader outcome e.g. increasing health and well-being, social interaction, settlement programs
- Consult with multicultural communities when developing of programs and materials
- Recruit and retain staff from multicultural backgrounds to reflect the broader community

### 3. *Communication/Marketing strategies*

- Using simple languages and terms
- Avoiding jargon or 'slang'
- Use more visual aids and less text
- Material should include imagery with people who are representative of the diverse community

### 4. *Areas for improvement*

- The Drowning Prevention sector is not necessarily reflective of the Australia population as a whole
- Reaching tourists - a transient population, with the difficulty in evaluating the impact of interventions/campaigns

## How are these findings being used?

- The key findings of this report were presented at the Addressing Drowning in Multicultural Communities Symposium held in December 2018.
- As part of the Symposium, the findings were discussed, along with other relevant research and practice, to inform the Symposium Action Statements.
- A method to measure the implementation and outcomes of the Action Statements will be developed

***If you have any questions regarding this report please contact [spidgeon@rlssa.org.au](mailto:spidgeon@rlssa.org.au)***



## Cultural Diversity and Drowning Prevention Report

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For Royal Life Saving Society - Australia, November 2018

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## Executive Summary

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Beasley Intercultural was engaged by the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia (RLSSA) to undertake qualitative research to provide an improved understanding amongst Australia's culturally diverse populations. Research was conducted to understand selected communities water safety knowledge, attitudes towards water, cultural beliefs and participation (or lack of) in aquatic activities.

Communities of focus were the Chinese, Korean, Indian, Vietnamese and newly arrived migrant African communities. Research included interviews with community representatives and professionals who work in drowning prevention and lifesaving around Australia. Beasley Intercultural and our research partner DiverseWerks also drew on our decades of experience and related research work with diverse communities in Australia. This report provides an overview of the selected communities, ten case studies, and a summary of key findings.

The Australian population is Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD). Almost one in every two Australians was born overseas or has an overseas born parent. Nearly one in five Australians speak a language other than English at home. Except for Australia's first peoples, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities, the Australian population is borne from generations of migration. There is also immense diversity within CaLD communities living in Australia, and among overseas born people who travel to Australia. This diversity includes but is not limited to: the period of time people have been in Australia; age and generation; gender; socio-economic status; ethnicity; and faith.

To deliver effective drowning prevention in CaLD communities, it's important to understand culture and life experience. Culture is 'the way we do things around here', what's considered 'normal' and learned in context. For people who have grown up in Australian culture it can be easy to assume everyone shares the same experience, expectations and engagement with water – that it is a place for recreation, for children to play; and, most importantly, water safety and swimming skills are a 'normal' element of education and safety. In many countries of origin for Australian migrant communities or international visitors, water is not considered a recreational resource, as it is in Australia. People do not have the same levels of exposure to swimming, experience of water safety, or awareness of potential risks.

When coming to Australia as a migrant, international student, or tourist, the experience of water based activities is sometimes surprising, shocking or, in the case of many people, dangerous. Almost everyone we interviewed for this research report was one or two steps within their social network from a drowning victim. The experience of Australian beach and surf conditions was often directly experienced through an unexpected encounter of a rip current. While many migrant interviewees shared their hopes that their Australian born children would learn to swim, adult swimming capabilities were less of a focus.

Different CaLD communities have specific needs, the cultural cohorts and identities within these groups are also distinct, and English language capability varies significantly. For newly arrived migrants there is great benefit from accessing water safety and 'learn to swim' programs for

themselves and their families. Such programs also fulfil an important community engagement and settlement service.

International students are often in an age group more prone to risk taking. Gender considerations are also significant with more than 83% of drownings occurring among males.

Tourists are a slightly different and rapidly expanding cohort. An example is a predicted three-fold increase in inbound Chinese arrivals in the coming decade. Managing risks and addressing safety issues in this group requires a very different approach in partnership with inbound operators and tourism authorities.

Due to the size of the CaLD community in Australia, and the overrepresentation of overseas born people in drowning statistics, the capacity of drowning prevention professionals to educate and work with CaLD communities is a core capability. Building capability will require a 'twin track' approach. One approach is to continue providing accessible services designed for maximum inclusion. The twin track simultaneous approach is to also target and provide nuanced interventions in identified high risk areas and communities.

Many organisations in the swimming and water safety sector in Australia are already delivering services to meet the needs of our CaLD population. There is a need to share lessons learned and best practice, build awareness and further develop capability in the sector. Through effective engagement with CaLD communities, RLSSA builds social cohesion, strengthens communities and, most importantly, saves lives. At Beasley Intercultural, our aim for this report will be make a contribution to this important work.

#### Key findings:

- People from CaLD backgrounds and overseas visitors are often less familiar with water safety precautions
- Many elements of drowning prevention require customisation to maximise CaLD participation
- Good practice in maximising CaLD participation facilitates inclusion and participation

## 1. Methodology

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The qualitative research by Beasley Intercultural was designed to augment, compliment, and provide insights into the pre-existing quantitative data published in 2018 by RLSSA 'A 10 Year National Study of Overseas Born Drowning Deaths'. The research also contributes to Goal 10 of the Australian Water Safety Strategy 2016-2020 to 'Reduce drowning deaths in high-risk populations'.

Beasley Intercultural research focused on the following communities: Chinese, Korean, Indian, Vietnamese, African (focusing on newly arrived migrant communities).

Deliverables for the project are:

1. **This report including:**
  - Brief overview of each identified cultural group
  - Key cultural insights in the context of RLSSA work
  - 10 case studies drawn from the identified cultural groups
2. **Presentation of the report findings at RLSSA Symposium**
3. **Half Day, CaLD Community Engagement Workshop**

### *Terminology and approach to 'Cultural Diversity'*

Throughout this report, we have used the term 'CaLD', which is an acronym for 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse'. It is important to acknowledge all Australians are culturally and linguistically diverse. The dominant demographic within the swimming and water safety sector is of people of white, anglo-saxon cultural descent who have grown up and been educated in Australia. No-one is 'culturally neutral', and people within RLSSA also come from a cultural group with norms, assumptions and behaviours which are learned and reinforced from the community they grow up in.

In this report we aim to highlight the differences of perspective, of approach and experience of people from diverse cultural backgrounds. While we are highlighting the experiences of migrants to Australia from some of our largest migrant cohorts in the case studies and cultural overviews, we will also explore the experiences and key cultural differences in relation to the dominant cultures within RLSSA.

## 2. Discussion and Themes Emerging

When cultural diversity is accommodated, a more inclusive approach often benefits everyone, and engages with a broader cohort of the community who are typically underrepresented, not only the initial target group. Many of the activities and behaviours which define appropriate and best practice delivery for CaLD communities are equally relevant for people from all walks of life. Effective service delivery adheres to key principles – it is client focused, relevant, and accessible. These principles are equally important for people with varying levels of ability, for generational diversity, and to maximise inclusion across socio-economic groups.

One of the cultural barriers to swimming for people from many cultures is gender considerations. In many cultures, 'modesty' is highly valued, and both women and men are uncomfortable in contexts where people are wearing limited clothing. In recent years, the increasing popularity of modesty fashion including items such as the 'burkini'- a cover up option initially designed for Muslim women, has made participation more possible. Interestingly, while the burkini was initially designed by and for Muslim women, it now has widespread usage by women from many faith backgrounds, women who are concerned about sun exposure and cancer risk, and people who simply are more comfortable in more modest attire. Women's only times at swimming pools have had similar results in increasing participation.

An example of how Royal Life Saving WA are educating and engaging effectively with the female Muslim community is through the below 'Swimwear Options Reference Guide'. Such a resource takes the ambiguity out of decisions around 'what to wear', what is permissible or advisable, and puts choice in the hands of the customer. It also sends a strong



### Communities in focus

#### Africa

- Growing migrant communities around Australia. Over 100,000 people speak an African language at home
- The continent of Africa is home to 54 countries, nine territories and two de facto independent states
- Many people from African countries have come to Australia as humanitarian migrants
- Largest religious affiliation is Christian, Islam second largest
- Families tend to be large
- The African population in Australia are relatively young nearly 30% aged 0-17 years and 38% aged 18-35 years

#### India

- Indian community in Australia one of the fastest growing, ranking within the top five migrant populations.
- 450,000 people in Australia were either born in India or speak an Indian language at home
- Many Indians in Australia have come through skilled migration pathways and include many doctors, engineers or IT professionals.
- High levels of English fluency
- 72% live in either NSW or Victoria
- Gender barriers to women's participation can occur due to restrictions in cultural clothing and what is deemed appropriate

#### China

- Largest migrant group in Australia of approximately 900,000 people
- Chinese the most spoken language



message of inclusion. Participation is possible at different levels, and diverse participation in swimming is normal and encouraged.

Access to information, and understanding of water safety in Australia varies among individuals, groups and communities. In some communities, a lack of English language fluency can limit ability to read safety signs at the beach or waterways. It also limits access to information about drowning prevention.

At the most basic level, the provision of information resources in languages other than English can be helpful. This introduction to swimming lessons developed by the NSW Government and AUSTSWIM is available in numerous languages, and the Vietnamese example is featured below. As well as using community languages, photographic representations of pool users who are representative of the diverse community is also important. It is important to be aware that providing initial information in a community language, there can be an expectation your service is able to respond to inquiries, and deliver services in a culturally inclusive and appropriate manner.



It is important when people from the specific language background engage with your service, you have the ability to respond effectively. Ideally, culturally responsive communications and services are developed with the community rather than ‘for’ them by outsiders. One of the challenges is recruiting swimming teachers and staff who are from the community, fluent in community languages and come from CaLD backgrounds.

*“Teachers within swimming and water safety tend to come from a particular cultural background, they aren’t diverse. They tend to be people who have long history with the water and are really comfortable with it. We have a lot of ex swimmers, people who’ve been in it from a young age. People who are*

#### Communities in focus

##### Korea

- Predominantly from South Korea
- 110,000 people living in Australia speak Korean at home
- Highly educated younger population, less English literacy in older population
- More than half identify as Christian, and many active church attendees
- Strong concentration of 55% of population in NSW, 14% in Victoria

##### Vietnam

- Almost 300,000 people in Australia speak Vietnamese at home
- The Vietnamese community in Australia is one of the most established migrant communities with migration occurring since the abolition of the White Australia Policy
- 74% live in either NSW or Victoria
- English proficiency varies according to age – younger people

*confident in their abilities. Typical is 20-22 years old, getting a formal education elsewhere, this is a casual job on the way to somewhere else. It's a really narrow group, there aren't many exceptions to that. It's very difficult to get more diversity within that group. "*

Matt Griffiths, Royal Life Saving NSW

A key element of influencing behaviour and engagement is to ensure messaging is delivered by liked and respected community members. People need to see themselves reflected in the organisations they participate in and respond to. This may be in images and promotions, among the demographics of staff, and among representatives and advocates within that community.

One example of a highly-targeted water-related culturally specific campaign was the 'tuck it eazy' campaign. This campaign was designed specifically for young men of a Lebanese cultural background using Jet skis around Botany Bay. The award-winning campaign was funded by Roads and Maritime Services and featured Rob Shehadie, a prominent comedian from the Lebanese community (robshehadie.com).

An often unrecognised cultural barrier to inclusive communication is understanding 'Australian English' which is often colloquial or jargon-filled. Understanding Australian English can be challenging for people who speak English as a second language. The capacity to use simple English, and terms which are widely understood increases comprehension.

*"To be understood, we don't really talk in life saving terms, it's not 'big boards and small boards' not 'nipper boards and rescue boards'. It's not 'boogie boards' it's small boards. It's not a rescue tube' it's 'the tube with the rope'."*

David Holland, Manager, Multicultural Projects, Life Saving Victoria.

Royal Life Saving WA has found that using visual aids is far more effective than written materials and has developed a series of 'Aqua quiz books'.

The way people from diverse backgrounds experience or engage with water safety classes and education can vary depending on their previous experiences and cultural background. Culture shapes our attitudes towards what is considered 'normal' when engaging with a service: attitudes towards timeliness and punctuality; expectations of how to engage respectfully with a 'teacher'; expected levels of customer service and a willingness to be in gender diverse groups. Male only swim lessons for example have been very popular when provided to the Indian community in Perth. Other issues were understanding of availability of childcare, and the requirement to educate participants that children can't be unsupervised pool-side while parents take lessons.

*"People just don't know what to expect when they come to the pool for the first time. The type of questions we get are:*

- *Will there be men there?*
- *Will we get our own change rooms*
- *How do we know which change rooms to use?*
- *What is a public area, what isn't?*
- *Where do I meet my teacher?*
- *Where do I take my clothes off? Where do I leave my things?"*

Matt Griffiths, Royal Life Saving NSW

Effectiveness when working across cultures is the ability to modify service delivery to meet specific community needs. In many of our interviews, the process of teaching how to swim was delivered differently in CaLD communities. Many cited the need to build in greater familiarisation with water – to build the comfort zone of participants who may have never had the chance to ‘play in’ water, who aren’t familiar with the sensations of their bodies in water, including floating and the sensory experience. Specific classes were also developed to address the needs of different demographics. In WA it was found that young men who couldn’t swim, were far more comfortable and likely to participate in a class with their peers. If they had been placed in a mainstream graded class by ability they would have been surrounded by children. Cost is another factor that can be a barrier to participation in many services. Different services around Australia had different approaches to this issue. In some locations programs were fully subsidised and free, while in Western Sydney, it was found that ensuring a payment occurred maximised participant commitment to the learning program.

Another factor identified in our research was the need to reduce ‘talking about’ skills, and increase ‘hands on’ practical experience – to break up explanations with more experiential opportunities to ‘have a go’. Many of these processes of ensuring consistent and ‘hands on’ approaches to learning are best practice adult learning principles. One of the oft-cited benefits of thinking about new and diverse ways to deliver services is the enhanced service delivery to more traditional customers.

*“Our ‘Access & Inclusion’ course was previously just about supporting people with a disability, but now it’s about CaLD also. The need that cuts across is about modifying your training for different groups...How to be inclusive is what matters - what to consider regarding people from different groups.”*

Jared Wilson, AusSWIM.

The ability of staff to build trust with participants is also of the utmost importance. Instructors need to have good communication skills and to be very aware of what people are comfortable with. Particularly when physically supporting or touching people, an ability to ask for permission, explain what is going to happen, and gradually build trust is important. For people from many cultures, being physically touched or held by a stranger is a very new and sometimes challenging experience.

*“In our industry, we tend to focus on technical issues, reviews of the skills frameworks, but not the soft skills or the teacher training framework. Emotional intelligence is critical. A serious discussion needs to be had on this.”*

Matt Griffiths, Royal Life Saving NSW

Just as people from migrant or international communities will benefit from learning about water safety and recreation opportunities, the swimming and water safety sector will equally benefit from becoming more participatory, reaching a broader audience, and becoming more inclusive. The benefits to community are substantive:

*“Our participants don’t only grow in their capabilities in swimming but also in their social skills. That’s such an important thing when you’re moving countries, so it helps their adjustment. It’s great to see.”*

Jacqui Rousseau, Royal Life Saving ACT

The process of change and adaptation to the needs of CaLD communities is often iterative – it happens through trial and error, and gradual modifications to service delivery. While it may be tempting to provide a ‘do’s and don’ts list’ of how to modify your specific service, the reality is, how exactly this must happen depends on the scale of the service, the community or communities you are working with, staff composition and a range of other factors.



The image to the left highlights how Life Saving Victoria takes a ‘pipeline’ approach to building participation among multicultural communities in their swimming programs. A key target is to build community role models and trainers, and enable employment in the sector. As highlighted in this model, people need to access services at different levels. At the first level, a focus is on simply understanding the role water plays in Australian culture through classroom and ‘beach education sessions’. At this level, a focus is on feeling safe, and enjoying being in the presence of water. Participants are then encouraged to engage in swimming lessons,

and targeted training programs for identified talent.

Cultural mediators play an important role in supporting services to connect migrant and international communities in Victoria. These include settlement services, community groups and leaders in the faith community. It’s not possible to engage directly with target customers on an individual basis – there simply aren’t the internal resources to spend on deep community engagement. To accelerate results and effectiveness, partnering and collaboration with existing community networks is essential. Building trusting relationships with partners and providers of community services takes time, and the Victorian experience demonstrates results with participation numbers increasing year on year.

While Life Saving Victoria provides some best practice examples, this is a result of more than 10 years of commitment, dedicated funding and staff. There is also a compelling business case – new migrant communities in Victoria are among the largest in Australia. As highlighted in the quote below, this engagement is now ‘business as usual’ and has built a momentum of its own.

*“When community are engaged, and critical mass is reached, this process becomes more self-sustaining. When this is done correctly, it becomes business as usual, it supports your business.”* David Holland, Life Saving Victoria

While the scope of this project is to focus on migrant communities and residents in Australia, it is also important to consider cultural challenges in drowning prevention among international tourists.

Many inbound international tourists have a lack of familiarity with Australian beach conditions and drowning hazards. This is paired with an increased likelihood of visiting popular beach locations to engage in water-based recreation.

Inbound Chinese tourism is forecast to triple over the next decade, increasing from 1.39 million/year (Australia's biggest inbound tourist group), to 3.9 million by 2026-27. As highlighted in our interviews with Chinese people, experience and knowledge of water safety and surf conditions are often very limited. English language capability is often very limited or non-existent.

Longer term water safety approaches such as swimming lessons and safety education are not possible with this group. What is required is quick, accessible, relevant and highly targeted approaches. To effectively mitigate the risks to this group, a coordinated effort with inbound tour operators, hotel and travel groups will be required. Additionally, education through entertainment may be an option for this group. Research by Warton and Brander (see references below) has found watching the TV program 'Bondi Rescue' has had an impact on beach safety awareness for international tourists to Australia. While this was playing on Qantas for a period of time, it may also be beneficial to provide Chinese airlines with Chinese subtitled versions.

Clearly, the capacity to effectively engage with, and deliver services to, CaLD communities is core business for RSLA. People from diverse cultural backgrounds have very different experiences and expectations relating to engagement with water and swimming. To deliver effective services and to prevent drowning, it is important to understand what barriers may exist to participation, to engage effectively and deliver services in a way which maximises results.

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### 3. Case Studies

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#### 3.1 Elizabeth – Ghana

Elizabeth moved from Ghana 10 years ago and now lives in Western Sydney. She is 23 years old and is in Australia with her parents, five siblings, an uncle, and her sister's baby. She speaks Ewe, a regional language of Ghana, at home.

Elizabeth rarely spends time near the water. However, she does visit the beach occasionally when visiting friends in Wollongong and has been to Bondi once. She has been to the Gold Coast once and enjoyed her time on the beaches there.

Elizabeth has stepped into the ocean but never swum in it. She is trying to go to pools and the beach more and wants to learn how to swim. She knows of a lot of people in the broader African community who have drowned, including one family friend, so she has some fear about the ocean. However, Elizabeth still enjoys being in the water and finds it relaxing.

Before coming to Australia...

Elizabeth had only passed by the beach once while living in Ghana. While being raised in a refugee camp, some people went to the beach to go fishing, including her father. But younger people did not get involved.

*"It's not something people do in Ghana. They just don't swim."*

If anyone swims in Ghana it will usually be in rivers. Although people usually play around the water rather than swim. This is mostly an activity for children.

Many people fear the water and drowning is common while swimming in the rivers. There is the belief there are spirits in the water that lure people and cause them to drown.

Since living in Australia...

Elizabeth has more of a desire to do activities around the water, including going to the beach with friends and going swimming. She has gone on boat rides several times and has taken walks around rivers, sometimes putting her feet in the water.

Elizabeth has worked at a Leisure Centre in Fairfield and spent a lot of time around the pool. While working there, she took swimming lessons but found the cost and poor engagement with the instructor to be significant barriers. There was also the sense of a lack of urgency when it came to taking lessons as swimming is not recognised as an essential life skill. Regardless, she still wants to learn how to swim and no longer be afraid of the water.

Although Elizabeth doesn't often read signs at the beach or by other bodies of water when with friends, she does check the signs when with children much younger than her. She is aware of what the flags mean at the beach, thanks to watching the TV show 'Bondi Rescue'. Elizabeth does

not drink alcohol for religious reasons, but she knows drinking around water is dangerous. Drinking alcohol around the water is not something she knows anyone to do.

Elizabeth's friends and family are very cautious around the water. They personally know at least two people who have drowned in Australia: a man who was out drinking with friends and disappeared when they went in the water, and a child in Wollongong who disappeared in the water at Christmas 2017.



### 3.2 Prisca – Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya

Prisca was born in Sudan and has lived in Australia for 15 years. She currently lives with her husband and their 5 children in Western Sydney.

Due to time constraints from work and other responsibilities, Prisca doesn't have much experience with the beaches, rivers and harbours in Australia. She doesn't have much interest in picnics, barbecues or other activities by the water, however she did enjoy water activities when she lived in Africa.

Before coming to Australia...

Prisca lived in Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia due to civil unrest in those nations. Because she moved around a lot, swimming wasn't something she did very often. When living in Ethiopia, she enjoyed more water activities such as swimming as there was easy access to public beaches.

Kenya was very dry, and Prisca had limited opportunities to access recreational water activities.

Prisca has never been taught how to swim and is not a confident swimmer. She found water recreation isn't popular in Kenya and Ethiopia apart from some school students who could choose swimming as a sport. Otherwise, pools were generally in affluent areas, not available to the public.

When going to the beach, safety precautions were not something Prisca or her friends and family considered. There were no lifeguards or signs, so people thought staying in the shallows was the best way to stay safe.

*"They say look after yourself before anyone, but my children learning how to swim is what's important right now. Not me."*

Since living in Australia...

Prisca has not had much experience going to the beach in Sydney. Her limited experiences are when she visits her brother and his family who live on the coast.

Prisca isn't sure what the flags mean at the beach. However, she understands it relates to danger and assumes it is best to swim between them like most people she has seen. Prisca doesn't often check the signs at the beach, although a simple sign such as those with a shark would stop her from entering the water.

Prisca is confident to approach and talk to the lifeguards if she needs to and has found them to be friendly and helpful.

Although Prisca has not taken up swimming lessons herself, she has ensured her children have taken professional swimming lessons. Swimming lessons for her children have always been a safety priority for her, even though most family and friends do not engage in swimming or other water activities.



Prisca thinks it would be helpful to have free, in-language swimming lessons as the cost of professional lessons has been a challenge, particularly for her large family.

### 3.3 Danny – China

Danny is an Australian citizen who was born in mainland China and has been living in Australia for more than 30 years. He lives in metropolitan Sydney with immediate family.

Danny loves the water. He often goes to the beach and enjoys travelling and discovering different beaches along the north and south coast of NSW. He loves to swim in the ocean and harbours although he has been scared by news coverage of shark attacks.

Before coming to Australia...

Danny lived in the countryside in mainland China where there were no beaches. He used to visit rivers or lakes when he was young, though later development and manufacturing in the area made it harder to find places to swim. With a large population and high pollution levels, it was difficult to access recreational water facilities.

Danny didn't have much of an opportunity to go to the beach and found not many people would go. When he lived in China, water activities, including swimming, were not very popular due to a lack of facilities when he lived.

Since living in Australia...

Danny is very active around water. Other than swimming, he and his family enjoy picnics at the beach and he will join his friends for rock fishing. He is more interested in beaches than rivers or creeks as they are easier to get to. Going to the beach is a very social thing for Danny and a common activity when friends or family from China or interstate are visiting.

Danny is aware of the signs at the beach and always checks the flags before entering the water, especially if there are not many people around. He and his family are particularly cautious with checking signs and flags after a friend died from an accident while rock fishing.

*"There is (a) belief that most friends and family think they are very experienced because of their experience with rock fishing so they don't acknowledge safety signs and warnings. Although something goes wrong and then everyone has a reality check."*

Danny will occasionally enjoy a beer after swimming at the beach. He understands that alcohol shouldn't be drunk "like soft drink" while swimming, so he and his friends don't drink before swimming. Danny is aware of the impact different medicines can have on someone's capacity to swim.

Danny thinks there is a lack of information in the Chinese community about water safety. He has tried to talk with others in the community, but people don't really pay attention until something bad happens. He also thinks many people in the community are too time poor to enjoy the beach as have bought family homes and are paying off a mortgage. However, Danny does believe in-language information at beaches and popular rock fishing locations would help reach out to Chinese people in Australia.

### 3.4 Jie – China

Jie is a Chinese born woman living in Australia on a working visa. She is 38-years-old and has lived in Australia for four years in metropolitan Sydney on her own, with her family still in mainland China.

Jie spends a lot of time around the water, particularly swimming at the beach.

Before coming to Australia...

Jie has had a lot of experiencing swimming. This was mostly done as a child before moving from her small town, Luo Yang in HeNan, to Beijing and with her family. As a child, she participated in lake fishing with family and friends but didn't enjoy it.

While living in Beijing as a young adult, Jie didn't go to the beach or participate in water activities as Beijing is a relatively dry city and not close to any open water. The river is the only form of public water space alongside private indoor and outdoor pools. Although she didn't enjoy it as much, pools were quite popular in China depending on finances and free time.

Jie and her family would annually go on summer holidays to a popular resort in Beidaihe, Heibei where swimming was a favourite activity. Because of this, she took professional swimming lessons when she was 12-years-old. When she was still new to swimming, she had a negative experience when entering the ocean and felt overwhelmed, needing assistance to get out. This was partly because she had only swum in pools and was unfamiliar with the force of the ocean water.

*"Learning to swim is perceived as learning how to ride a bike. A skill that is with you for the rest of your life."*

As a child, Jie's safety precautions included never going to the beach or pool alone and always staying under the supervision of adults.

A lack of beaches and facilities to swim, along with the high cost of swimming lessons, act as barriers for many people living in Beijing from learning how to swim.

Since living in Australia...

Jie loves to spend time at the beach with friends both for swimming and sun-bathing. She hasn't spent much time near rivers and creeks but has enjoyed snorkelling in the Great Barrier Reef and in other countries such as Thailand and Malaysia.

Jie knows to swim between the flags but doesn't pay much attention to what signs at the beach are saying. However, she takes note of other people swimming in certain areas to decide if it is safe for her to swim. Jie has watched TV show 'Bondi Rescue' in the past and admires the work of lifeguards. She understands what the lifeguards are there to do and would feel very comfortable approaching them if necessary.

Jie noticed the water temperature in China is much warmer compared to Australia, which she thinks may be a deterrent for others to swim or learn to swim. Additionally, she feels the beach conditions are very different compared to swimming in a pool, where she learned to swim, and this can be surprising.

### 3.5 Stuti – India

Stuti is a 26-year-old international student at the University of Sydney. She has been in Australia for 18 months.

Stuti spends a lot of time around the water in summer and often goes to Balmoral Beach in Mosman. Although she is not a strong swimmer, she likes to go swimming in the ocean, however, she doesn't want to take part in water sports such as surfing due to a fear of drowning. When going swimming, Stuti checks if there are other people around in the water in case something goes wrong. Additionally, she will always go to the beach with friends and never alone.

Stuti has gone kayaking several times and been on a boat. She enjoys being around the water and taking ferries.

Before coming to Australia...

Stuti didn't do a lot of swimming. This was primarily because she was afraid she wouldn't be able to swim and would drown. Although she had a desire to swim, she did not like the method of teaching in India and had a bad experience with lessons due to being expected to learn by being thrown in the water. She eventually learned the basics of swimming from a friend.

As Stuti has mostly lived inland, she did not go to the beach until she lived in Mumbai. Even in Mumbai, Stuti did not spend much time in the water as it was less of a cultural activity. More time was spent in activities around water rather than in the water.

Because all the rivers in the cities Stuti has lived in are considered holy sites, people do not want to go into the water for recreation. Many religious activities are conducted in the water which can make it dirty, so people of all ages and lifestyles prefer to do things around the water like eating, socialising and occasionally boating.

Since living in Australia...

Stuti spends a lot more time around the beach. On warm, sunny days she will go to the beach and often goes once or twice a week.

Swimming has been the main activity for Stuti, but she has tried other things such as kayaking and snorkelling. It is a social activity for her.

*"Everything here is different to back home. Culture is such a big part of this difference."*

Although Stuti drinks socially, she never consumes alcohol around the water, nor does she know anyone who does. Stuti is aware of the dangers of the ocean, particularly the strength of the waves, but she learned quickly the significance of the signs and flags at the beach and knows the people in uniforms are always there to help.

### 3.6 Dr Yadu – India

Dr Yadu Singh is a grandfather and cardiologist living in Sydney. He is from a small farming village in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh but has lived in Australia for over 28 years.

Dr Yadu and his family spend time around the water. He has a pool in their home and occasionally visits beaches around Bondi and Wollongong. He and his family members have swum in the ocean in Australia and some of them have travelled to Thailand, Spain and the United States where they have swum.

While at the beach, Dr Yadu and his family never swim outside the watch of the lifeguard or outside the flags. They will never swim in the evening when there is no patrol. Dr Yadu takes these safety precautions because he understands the waves and cold water can cause trouble.

At home, Dr Yadu keeps the pool fenced for children and regularly checks the cleanliness and quality of the pool water. Dr Yadu has been on boats on Sydney harbour and goes for picnics in parks around the ocean and rivers throughout Sydney.

Before coming to Australia...

Dr Yadu lived in a village in central India, with limited exposure to the beach. When he had been to the beach, the sea was rough and very close to the shoreline, being a common experience for people from inland India. With many people not appreciating and understanding the dangers of the ocean. While living in the city for medical schooling, Dr Yadu often went to pools for both leisure and to swim.

Dr Yadu taught himself to swim in the shallows of a big pond in his home village under the watch of his parents. In his town, people used to wash themselves in the pond, so being in and around the water was part of the lifestyle for people of all ages.

Dr Yadu is aware of the risks of drowning in deep water after one of his classmates drowned in the river in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh after swimming too far out without enough experience.

Since living in Australia...

Dr Yadu has had more experience with the beach and the ocean. He does more activities around the water because he lives in Australia – this is both because of access to beaches and the need to cross the water via ferries. While Dr Yadu may drink alcohol on a boat or a cruise, he will not drink at the beach and does not know anyone who does.

Dr Yadu has ensured his children were taught to swim. They were taught by family members but younger children in the family have had professional classes recommended by their school.

*“Not many people in India have exposure to the beach, so they’re not aware of the dangers associated with swimming in open water.”*

Dr Yadu is concerned other people moving to Australia from India do not have the same awareness of the dangers of the water and this needs to be addressed to reduce drowning.



### 3.7 Jaeyeon – South Korea

Jaeyeon is a permanent resident who arrived in Australia from South Korea seven years ago and is now living in metropolitan Sydney. He is 31-years-old and lives with his wife and 3-year-old child.

Jaeyeon and his family spend time around the water in Sydney. Maroubra is his preferred beach as it is ideal for easy parking and has a children's playground. Playing in the park with his child and swimming in the ocean are things he likes to do while at the beach.

Jaeyeon goes out with friends for a barbecue and drinks by the beach, though this is something he does not do with the whole family.

Before coming to Australia...

Going to the beach was not a common thing for Jaeyeon to do in South Korea. There were not many beaches for swimming in his part of the country. When he did go to the beach, they were quite muddy, and the water was not very nice. Jaeyeon did go to rivers sometimes though he did not spend much time in the water.

Jaeyeon spent several years in the navy. However, while he was in boats on the ocean didn't spend a lot of time in the water. Before moving to Australia, he taught himself how to swim and he swam in pools quite often rather than spending time at the beach.

Swimming pools are very popular in South Korea, despite being very crowded. Jaeyeon does think water recreation is a lot more popular in Australia than South Korea. Swimming is an activity more popular with young people from their teens into their 30s. For those wanting to swim, Jaeyeon feels there is no barrier as people who want to learn, or practice swimming can go to the pool.

Although Jaeyeon was aware of safety precautions in and around the water, safety is not something he thought about in South Korea.

Since living in Australia...

Jaeyeon goes to the beach a lot more than he did in South Korea. Swimming in the ocean or a pool is his primary water activity. He doesn't have time to do other activities such as boating or fishing. When drinking, Jaeyeon stays around the water but doesn't ever enter it.

Jaeyeon has had a near drowning experience in Bondi. This occurred before he knew of any signs to look out for or safety regulations around the beach. Additionally, the conditions of the Australia water were a surprise, with the strength of the waves being something he had not experienced in other countries. As Jaeyeon had mostly swum in pools, swimming in the ocean was a lot more difficult for him.

*"The beaches are really different, I didn't expect there to be so many waves."*



Since this experience, Jaeyeon understand the meaning of the flags at the beach. Although he doesn't always look at the signs around the water, he always swims between the flags and knows the lifeguards are there to help.

### 3.8 Sohyun – South Korea

Sohyun is a Korean born, permanent resident of Australia. She is 55-years-old and is currently living with her husband and two daughters in Western Sydney. She first came to Australia when she was in her late teens after which she returned to South Korea to live for several years before coming back to Australia as a permanent resident.

Sohyun spends little time near the water. If she does it is usually as a visit Bondi or Coogee beach. She doesn't enjoy swimming as she is uncomfortable being in a swimsuit and intimidated by the water due to a fear of drowning. Despite being able to swim, Sohyun doesn't think the ocean or harbour is a safe place to swim.

Before coming to Australia...

Sohyun didn't have many opportunities to go to the beach or pool to swim in South Korea. She found water recreation was more popular with tourists than with locals. Beaches are overcrowded, and summer weather doesn't extend over many months to encourage water activities.

While living in South Korea, Sohyun didn't know how to swim well as she had never taken swimming lessons. Sohyun believes this was common as many parents give children very strict study schedules, meaning children are at school very early in the morning followed by private tutoring lessons at home and on the weekends. As such there are limited opportunities for young people to learn to swim and this is often carried through to adulthood.

Since living in Australia...

Sohyun likes to visit the beaches although chooses not to swim, preferring to take walks along the shoreline and have picnics with friends and family.

Sohyun acknowledges the flags and signs but has never learned what they mean. Based on others at the beach, she has noticed the flags indicate where you should be swimming. She has never seen lifeguards around and doesn't know what they do. She thinks there isn't enough information available about lifeguards on the beach.

Sohyun was never taught to swim but is self-taught through watching people swim on tv, particularly from the Olympics, and mimicking this over time at the pool. She ensured her daughters attended swimming lessons at an early age as she felt this was an important skill for them to have. She also felt this would help them participate in Australian culture. As such, her daughters love the beach and choose to go and swim often.

*"Going to the beach and swimming is such an important part of the Australian culture. I always wanted to make sure my daughters were a part of this growing up."*

Sohyun had a colleague who died during an accident while rock fishing on his own. Although she noted he was a very well-known member of the Korean community, his death didn't lead to water safety awareness within the community. She thinks this is due to the community already

being cautious and aware of going to the beach in rough weather conditions and not swimming in deep waters.

### 3.9 Mihn – Vietnam

Mihn is an Australia citizen who moved to Australia 33 years ago as a refugee from Vietnam. He is 56-years-old and lives with his children and wife in inner Sydney.

Mihn spends most of his time around the water fishing but occasionally goes swimming. Swimming in the ocean is usually an activity for the summer and something he does when friends or family want to go to the beach.

Before fishing or swimming, Mihn watches out for big waves and rocks as they can be dangerous. He is afraid of shark attacks, so is generally more comfortable in the shallows.

Before coming to Australia...

Mihn lived in the mountains in Vietnam and wasn't very close to the beach. As such, he didn't know much about swimming in the ocean. He would normally go to small rivers to learn how to swim as they were quite narrow where it was safer to swim. At this time, swimming pools weren't common outside the city, so Mihn had never been to one.

When Mihn moved into a refugee camp along the coast his swimming improved, and he learnt how to swim and fish in the ocean. Mihn had friends who taught him how to dive and fish. He also learned from his grandfather after living for one and half years in the refugee camp.

Mihn found people didn't take safety precautions when being near the water in Vietnam. Some people he knew were scared of the water due to the fear of drowning.

Since living in Australia...

Mihn continues enjoying activities around the water. In addition to swimming and fishing in the ocean, he goes bike riding with friends along rivers.

Mihn has recently learned about the meanings of the flags at the beach, but for a majority of his life in Australia he has not known. He will read signs to check for safety in the water and understands lifeguards are there to help.

Although Mihn doesn't like or drink alcohol, he does have friends from Vietnam who enjoy drinking around the water.

Mihn thinks the differences between the Australian and Vietnamese waters causes people from Vietnam to drown in Australia. Because Vietnamese waters are warmer and Australian beaches have much bigger waves, Mihn believes many don't understand the dangers of the Australian oceans and don't consider issues such as muscles cramps.

*"People who come to Australia from Vietnam do silly things in the water. They don't think about the dangers in the water or the waves when visiting a beach in Australia."*

### 3.10 Doan – Vietnam

Doan is 22 years old and is studying at the University of Technology Sydney and works part-time. He moved from Vietnam to Australia 12 years ago. He currently lives with his parents and sister in Western Sydney.

Doan spends a lot of time around the water, swimming at the beach, in lakes or in swimming pools.

Before coming to Australia...

Doan did a lot of swimming as a child in Vietnam, at the beach, in pools and creeks due to opportunities provided by his parents and school. However, Doan found his experience not to be the norm in Vietnam where swimming was not popular, especially in his home of Ho Chi Min City. This was because he lived inland and many adults didn't have the time to swim as they worked long hours. Additionally, limited swimming facilities and the cost of entry into public swimming pools acted as barriers for people learning to swim.

Doan says there is a lot of pressure from study schedules and maintaining good grades for young students. This involved a strict timeline going to school, coming home to continue studying, eating, then sleep. As such, there was little time for recreation and learning to swim was a low priority.

Living in Ho Chi Min City, Doan needed to travel at least two hours to get to the beach. In Vietnam, Doan found most people will not swim in the ocean because they think it's not safe and they will discourage others from doing so.

Since living in Australia...

Doan has made a hobby of many activities around and in the water. He enjoys fishing, surfing, kayaking and hikes along rivers and beaches. Doan does a lot more of these activities since living in Australia because he wants to have experiences not available to him when living in Vietnam.

Doan will consume alcohol if he's at a picnic or barbecue by the water, but he'll never drink if he is planning to go in the water.

Doan has had a number of near-drowning experience at the beach. His worst experience was when he was taken by a current while swimming at the beach. Doan raised his arm as he was taught in a beach safety course for international students at UTS Insearch. He was rescued and taken to shore by a lifeguard.

*"Swimming in a pool is so much more different than swimming at the beach. Lessons at the pool don't actually help you when swimming against currents and waves."*

Doan also noticed a difference in water temperature in Sydney which can cause cramps while swimming. It is something he thinks many coming from Vietnam don't expect or understand.

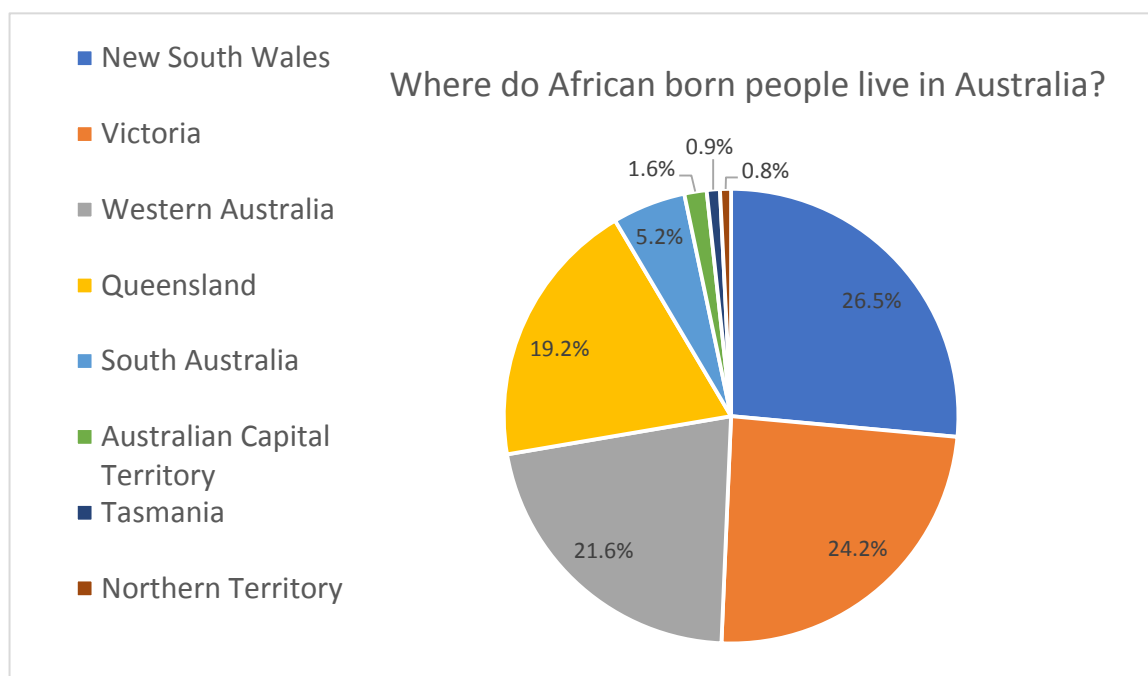
Doan is aware of swimming between the flags at the beach. He thinks it is important to check signs before swimming. Before going to the beach, Doan does research to understand things such as jelly fish season and when the high tide comes in.

## 4. Community Profiles

### 4.1 African Community in Australia

The continent of Africa is home to 54 countries, nine territories and two de facto independent states with limited or no recognition. In Australia over 100,000 people speak an African language at home. Women and men have migrated to Australia in comparable numbers, with 51% women. The main languages spoken at home are Somali (Somalia), Dinka (South Sudan), Swahili (Great Lakes Region, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Mozambique, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Shona (Zimbabwe).

Income levels are low for migrants from African countries courtesy of the combination of large families and incomes up to \$90,999 per annum. These are young communities, with almost 30% aged 0-17 years and a further 38% aged from 18-35 years.



Overall Population (23,401,891)		
Population (Total)	Number	%
Pan-African language spoken at home	101,931	0.4%
Persons born in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa	388,179	1.7%

Age Groups and English Language Proficiency				
Age	Good ELP	Poor ELP	Not stated	Total
0-17	25,757	4,827	557	31,141
18-35	33,333	2,286	566	36,185
36-64	27,808	4,261	484	32,553

65+	1,299	716	27	2,042
Total	88,197	12,090	1,634	101,921



Country of Birth of Parents	
Mother	Father
Somalia (13,136)	Somalia (12,878)
Ethiopia (12,769)	Ethiopia (12,584)
Zimbabwe (12,573)	Zimbabwe (12,406)
South Sudan (10,590)	South Sudan (10,547)
Sudan (7,875)	Sudan (7,693)

Annual Income	
Total Annual Income	Total
Nil	10,660
Up to \$33,799	29,594
\$33,800 - \$90,999	26,044
\$91,000 - \$155,999	4,141
\$156,000+	1,197

Language Spoken at Home	
African Language	Total
Somali	14,176
Dinka	12,700
Swahili	11,465
Shona	11,040
Amharic	6,811

Sex	
Male	Female
49,602	52,328

## Cultural Background

Africa is a continent of vastly diverse landscapes, ethnicities, languages and cultures. However, there are some common cultural practices as well as attitudes towards water across the African continent.

According to the ABS 2016 Census, Christianity makes up the largest religious affiliation of African born people in Australia (approximately 259,433), with Islam as the second largest group (35,276). Family often plays an important, central role in the lives of African peoples across all religious affiliations. The concept of family usually includes extended family and, in some cultures, can also include a network of relationships. The notion of prioritising and helping family where possible is common throughout Africa, particularly in countries with harsh climates.

In countries with growing urbanisation and Christianity, nuclear families and individualism are becoming more prominent although with ongoing deep connections to extended family. However, for most African peoples living in rural areas, multigenerational households are common. For people moving to Australia, smaller families may be the preference due to the expense of raising children, however they often remain larger than average family size in

Australia. Extended family usually live together or within close proximity for many people from Africa living in Australia.

In traditional family structures, family responsibilities are often unequally distributed towards women in many African cultures. This acts as a barrier to participating in recreational activities and sports due to a lack of leisure time.

There is a diverse history of migration of people from African countries in Australia. The most represented countries of origin include:

- Ethiopia: one of the top ten source countries for humanitarian entrants into Australia since 2000. Many have been refugees in countries as Kenya and Somalia.
- Somalia: most of the Somali community has migrated to Australia since the 1990s under the humanitarian stream due to the ongoing Somali Civil War.
- South Sudan: 72.4% migrated between 2001 and 2006 from refugee camps in Egypt, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia fleeing drought, famine and war in South Sudan.
- Sudan: experiences vary from Christian migrants post-Sudanese independence, Muslim political refugees from the 1983-2005 Second Civil War and refugees from the Darfur War.
- Zimbabwe: In the 20th century most who arrived were of British ancestry. Since 2001, an influx of native Zimbabweans have migrated as skilled migrants due to ongoing economic difficulty.

#### Cultural attitudes towards water recreation

Attitudes towards water are equally diverse and complex throughout Africa. In countries impacted by European colonisation and enslavement, the water and the sea have been seen as dangerous due to children being captured while swimming. This severely hindered swimming culture in some areas. There are additional geographic and cultural factors to the diverse relationships to water and swimming in Africa.

For some, geographic proximity to water can be a barrier to learning to swim. Transport to bodies of water can be expensive and time consuming which can result in people having never seen the ocean despite living within driving distance.

Public swimming pools are expensive to construct and maintain and so are not made available for many communities in Africa. For countries with public swimming facilities, many were segregated or excluded non-white people until the 1980s and 1990s in countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa. Additionally, in communities with public swimming pools, economic disparity also prevents access for many.

Not all bodies of water are suitable to swim in. There can be strong currents or tides, parasites in calmer bodies of water or dangerous water dwelling wildlife such as crocodiles and hippopotamus.

While there is a long cultural history of swimming and socialising in and around bodies of water throughout parts of Africa, it is not a widespread practice for many African communities. Issues

around cultural and religious norms and expectations of modesty for both men and in particular for women may also be a barrier to water recreation.

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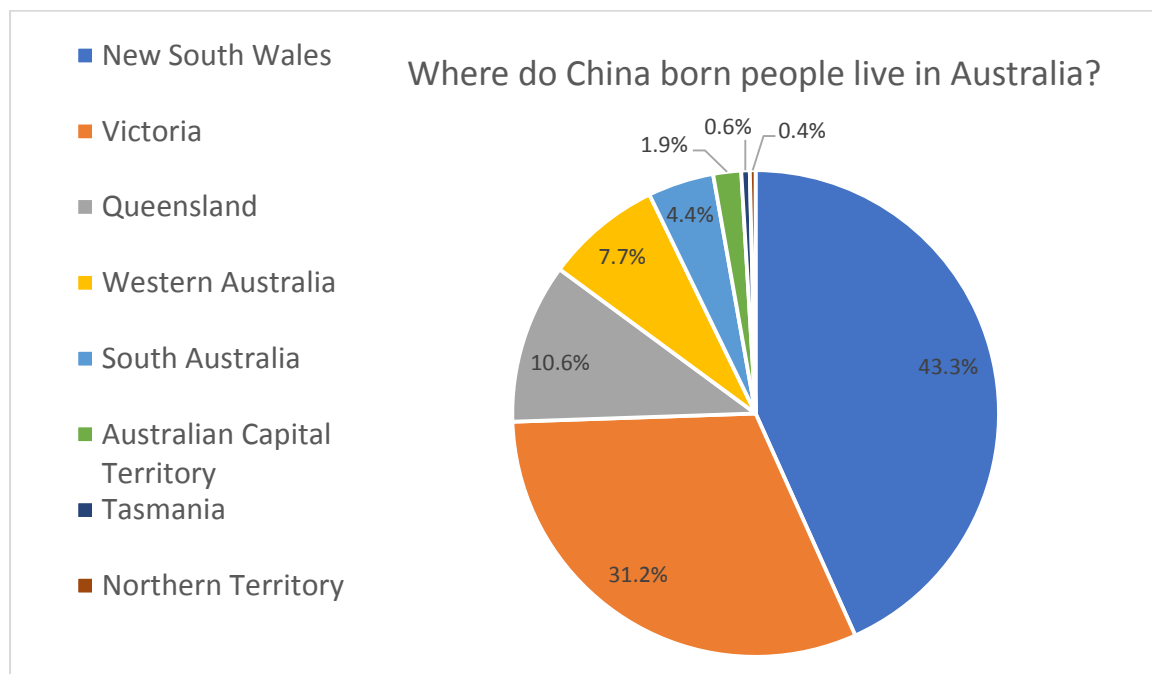
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## 4.2 Chinese Community in Australia

At just over 900,00 people, the Chinese speaking population is one of the largest migrant group in Australia. Most of the Chinese Australian population reside in NSW at almost 44%, followed by Victoria at just over 31%. There are slightly more women than men in the Chinese Australian community at 54%. Mandarin is the most spoken Chinese language in Australia, with almost 600,000 speakers, followed by Cantonese with just over 280,000.

Proficiency levels in English vary according to age group, with younger people under 35 years having higher English skill level than older people. More people aged 65 and above have lower English level proficiency than other age cohorts. Most people who speak a Chinese language at home in Australia are from mainland China, followed by Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Vietnam. Most people are in the income bracket up to \$90,999 per annum.



Overall Population (23,401,891)		
Population (Total)	Number	%
Chinese language spoken at home	927,501	4.0%
Persons born in China	645,886	2.8%

Age Groups and English Language Proficiency				
Age	Good ELP	Poor ELP	Not stated	Total
0-17	110,126	36,120	1,545	147,791
18-35	336,239	49,846	1,523	387,608
36-64	206,209	105,035	1,547	312,791
65+	30,895	48,232	637	79,764

Total	683,469	239,233	5,252	927,954
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Country of Birth of Parents	
Mother	Father
China (638,017)	China (638,295)
Malaysia (79,542)	Malaysia (76,518)
Hong Kong (56,591)	Hong Kong (56,076)
Taiwan (49,531)	Taiwan (45,970)
Vietnam (32,620)	Vietnam (30,064)

Annual Income	
Total Annual Income	Total
Nil	209,936
Up to \$33,799	264,899
\$33,800 - \$90,999	246,071
\$91,000 - \$155,999	53,271
\$156,000+	15,760

Language Spoken at Home	
Chinese Language	Total
Mandarin	596,713
Cantonese	280,947
Chinese, nfd.	19,978
Min Nan	17,907
Hakka	8,986
Wu	3,383

Sex	
Male	Female
427,249	500,690

## Cultural Background

The Chinese population is very diverse, made up of 56 officially recognised ethnic groups and at least eight languages with countless dialects.

Across Chinese cultures family is an important part of life. Family is understood as a collective identity whereby an individual can impact the appearance or reputation of the family as a whole. This concept is referred to as "face". With this cultural understanding of family, the interests of the individual are superseded by the needs and interests of the family. Households vary from nuclear families (more common in mainland China and Hong Kong) to large multigenerational families (more common in Taiwan).

Of the territories of China, the three with the largest migration into Australia are mainland China (China), Hong Kong and Taiwan. There are distinct cultural and linguistic differences between these peoples and their histories of migration to Australia.

- Mainland China: Migrants from mainland China are currently the third largest cohort of migrants into Australia, many of whom come from professional backgrounds. There is also a large number who come as students and as tourists.
- Taiwan: Since the mid-1970s, the Taiwanese community has grown in Australia to reflect the political and economic changes that have occurred in Taiwan. Taiwanese people have been better placed to travel abroad and to seek international investment opportunities. Many migrants have entered through the business migration program.
- Hong Kong: Australia has a long history of migration from Hong Kong since the gold rush of the 1850s. Since the end of the White Australia Policy, many people have immigrated from Hong Kong as students or as skilled professionals.

China has undergone major social changes in the last six decades. Both gender and family structures have undergone changes since the 1949 founding of the People's Republic of China. Women have since the 1950s gained more economic independence and control over their personal and professional choices. While China was an early adopter of women's emancipation and gender equality from that decade on, this has not ended all traditional stereotypes on the role of women within the family and society in China. However, the rise of women's education and socioeconomic status and independence has altered family life in contemporary China, but women remain disadvantaged in terms of labour income, positions of authority, and housework.

#### Cultural attitudes towards water recreation

Attitudes towards water recreation in Chinese speaking countries are very diverse. In urban areas such as Shanghai and Beijing, there are few natural bodies of water that are appropriate to swim in. While public pools are popular in these areas, particularly during summer, they can be overcrowded and thus learning to swim is not as common in these areas. However, mainland China has over 14,000km of coastline and Taiwan is an island with approximately 1,500km of coast, thus behaviour towards water can differ across the different states and territories of China and Chinese speaking countries.

Tourism Australia conducted a Consumer Demand Project which found that Australian waters and recreational water activities are a big part of Australia's image to the broader Chinese market. Australian beaches were the most appealing attraction to participants in this study at 62%, compared with Australian wildlife second at 52%. Australia was also strongly associated with remote coastal, beach and aquatic locations, tropical islands and locations and coastal experiences by both Chinese participants who had never visited Australia and those who had.

Water recreation is a largely appealing factor for Chinese people living in and visiting Australia. For many people coming from China it is a good opportunity to enjoy the coast in a way they are not able to in the densely populated urban areas of their city of origin.

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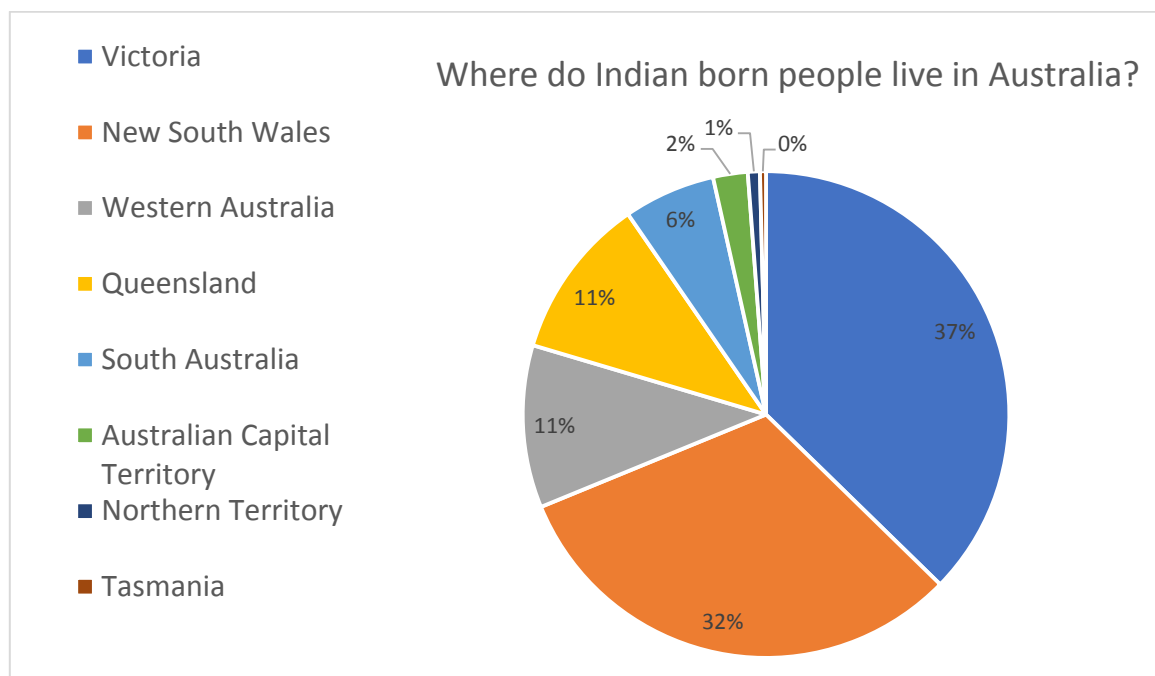
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### 4.3 Indian Community in Australia

The Indian community in Australia is one of the fastest growing migrant groups over recent decades. Currently just over 450,000 people across Australia where either born in India or speak an Indian language at home. The vast majority of the community live in NSW (38%) and Victoria (33%). There are also growing communities in Queensland (11%) and Western Australia (9%). Men make up a slight majority of the community at 53%.

The Indian community in Australia has high levels of both English proficiency and education levels. This is reflected in average income levels up to \$156,000 per annum within the community, which is higher than other migrant communities.

The Indian subcontinent community in Australia is diverse and originate from a range of countries other than India including Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and the Maldives, as well as the range of different regions with distinct languages and religions within India.



Overall Population (23,401,891)		
Population (Total)	Number	%
Persons born in India	455,385	1.9%
Indian language spoken at home	787,737	3.4%

Age Groups and English Language Proficiency				
Age	Good ELP	Poor ELP	Not stated	Total
0-17	33,003	4,728	513	38,244
18-35	200,899	4,446	1,637	206,982
36-64	116,526	9,451	932	126,909



65+	11,868	5,735	292	17,895
Total	362,296	24,360	3,374	390,030

Country of Birth of Parents	
Mother	Father
India (456,655)	India (458,431)
Sri Lanka (98,104)	Sri Lanka (97,911)
Pakistan (56,749)	Pakistan (55,861)
Nepal (55,436)	Nepal (55,521)
Bangladesh (48,040)	Bangladesh (48,029)

Annual Income	
Total Annual Income	Total
Nil	67,603
Up to \$33,799	104,425
\$33,800 - \$90,999	174,705
\$91,000 - \$155,999	46,077
\$156,000+	13,936

Language Spoken at Home	
Indian Language	Total
Hindi	159,653
Punjabi	132,490
Tamil	73,162
Urdu	69,300
Sinhalese	64,606

Sex	
Male	Female
245,414	209,974

## Cultural Profile

India is the second most populated country in the world with over 1 billion people. The country is famous for its incredibly rich culture and history. Indian culture is known to be incredibly diverse with several notions of cultures, languages, regions and religious beliefs. The country is separated into two ethnicities with Indo-Aryan representing the North and Dravidian representing the South that houses 22 major languages written in 13 different scripts and over 720 dialects.

The Indian community in Australia is one of the fastest growing, ranking within the top five migrant populations. The most common pathway for Indians to migrate to Australia was in the form of skilled migration that includes many occupations ranging from doctors, engineers and

those with both technical and computer skills. English is also very commonly known amongst the Indian population.

Family is the central component in the lives of many Indians. It is demonstrated through a collective notion whereby loyalty and interdependence on family members is essential. An Indian family is usually depicted as the traditional nuclear type, with central members and strong connection to extended family. Although due to the heavy migration from India to other countries, there has been a shift of maintaining close bonds with family overseas.

## Culture towards water

Recreational water activities in India are isolated to certain regions and targeted towards tourists visiting the area. An example of this is Goa, which has become a popular water sport destination for holiday makers to visit and less popular amongst locals.

The religious value of rivers in India is an ideological issue that continues to divide the nation in discussion regarding biodiversity and ecological balance. The Ganges is valued as 'sacred' in religious rituals and a form of water that should not be engaged in recreationally. Others consider the religious acts as a form of pollution in the river and something that continues to happen in other rivers across the nation. Religious practices can also be viewed as a barrier for individuals (particularly women) to participate in recreational water activities due to the restriction in cultural clothing and what is deemed appropriate.

Water management in India highlights the varying practices amongst household members living in rural regions of the country. Due to limited supply and distribution of water for households living in rural areas of India, individuals are required to 'collect' the water at certain points for everyday use. Water collection is viewed as an entirely female domain with many women within the household traveling every day by foot to collect and provide water for other family members.

Attitudes to participation in sports more generally among the Indian community can be based on gender divisions. Family responsibilities, the value given to sports broadly, and the importance of work and education can limit the participation of women in particular. The cost of sport and recreation can present a barrier, particularly in the early settlement period in Australia when it can be considered a luxury.

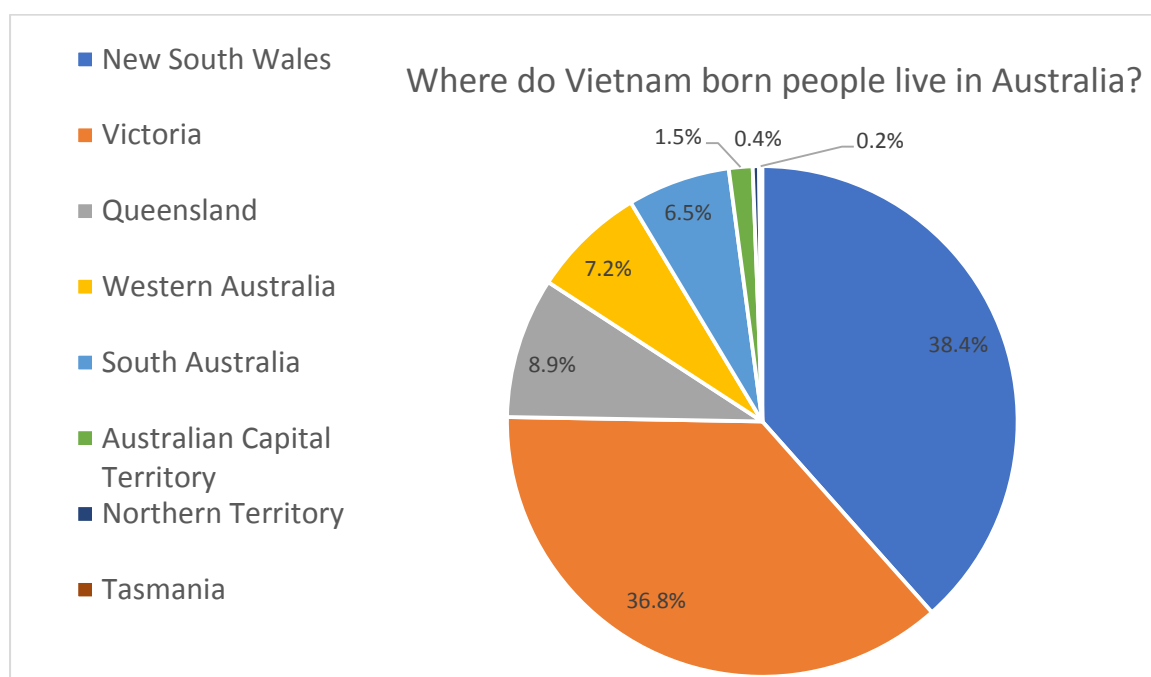
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## 4.4 Vietnamese Community in Australia

Almost 300,000 people in Australia speak Vietnamese at home. The largest Vietnamese Australian communities live in NSW and Victoria in equal numbers at 37% each of the total community. Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia all have similar sized communities at 7% each. There are slightly more women in the Vietnamese Australian community at 55%.

Like many migrant communities, English proficiency levels vary according to age. Younger people under 35 have higher English skill levels than older people. People aged more than 65 years have a much higher rate of low English skills than any other age bracket. Three-quarters of the Vietnamese Australian community nationally have an annual income between \$0 and \$90,000.



Overall Population (23,401,891)		
Population (Total)	Number	%
Vietnamese language spoken at home	277,405	1.1%
Persons born in Vietnam	219,351	0.9%

Age Groups and English Language Proficiency				
Age	Good ELP	Poor ELP	Not stated	Total
0-17	48,433	10,603	639	59,675
18-35	74,074	12,730	435	87,239
36-64	61,714	49,208	649	111,571
65+	8,641	20,671	240	29,552

Total	192,862	93,212	1,963	288,037
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Country of Birth of Parents	
Mother	Father
Vietnam (263,271)	Vietnam (254,800)

Annual Income	
Total Annual Income	Total
Nil	41,608
Up to \$33,799	97,702
\$33,800 - \$90,999	70,691
\$91,000 - \$155,999	9,499
\$156,000+	2,550

Sex	
Male	Female
129,521	147,877

## Cultural Profile

Vietnam is one of the most populated countries in the Southeast Asia Region. The country is famous for its beaches, rivers and lakes, with a coastline that stretches for approximately 3,260km. Vietnamese culture is a mix of tradition and modern globalism, so the ideologies and cultural expressions of the Vietnamese people are diverse. Although there has been a history of invasion in Vietnam from both neighbouring and western countries, most people retain a strong sense of national identity.

Family is the most important aspect of life in Vietnam. It is much more interdependent and tight-knit than what many Western cultures are familiar with. Like other countries in the region, an individual's actions can impact on the public perception of the family's collective reputation.

The Vietnamese community in Australia is one of the most well established migrant communities as they were one of the first groups to arrive in Australia after the abolition of the White Australia Policy. Since the 1970s many Vietnamese people have migrated to Australia in various ways including:

- Refugees from the American War in the 1970s and 1980s;
- Migrants who married Australian Troops during this time or children who were adopted by Australian families;
- Skilled migrants and people moving through the family stream for economic and educational opportunities from the 1980s on;
- A smaller group of people who have entered Australia to escape harassment for their religious or political beliefs.

## Culture towards water

Enjoying water recreation is very common for people in Vietnam, especially in summer. However, learning to swim is uncommon, particularly amongst children. In a recent survey, the Vietnamese Department of Child Care and Protection found that only 35% of children living in the Mekong Delta and 10% in the Red River Delta can swim.

This can be largely attributed to swimming only being taught outside of schools and classes being very expensive for the average family income. Additionally, for those living outside urban areas it can be difficult to find instructors and adequate facilities to learn. As such, many are taught by family members and expect natural reflexes to assist in the water.

Some traditional social norms around feminine identity can act as a significant barrier for Vietnamese women participating in public water recreational activities. This can lead to disinterest among women in engaging in water activities due to the masculine connection and limited private facilities.

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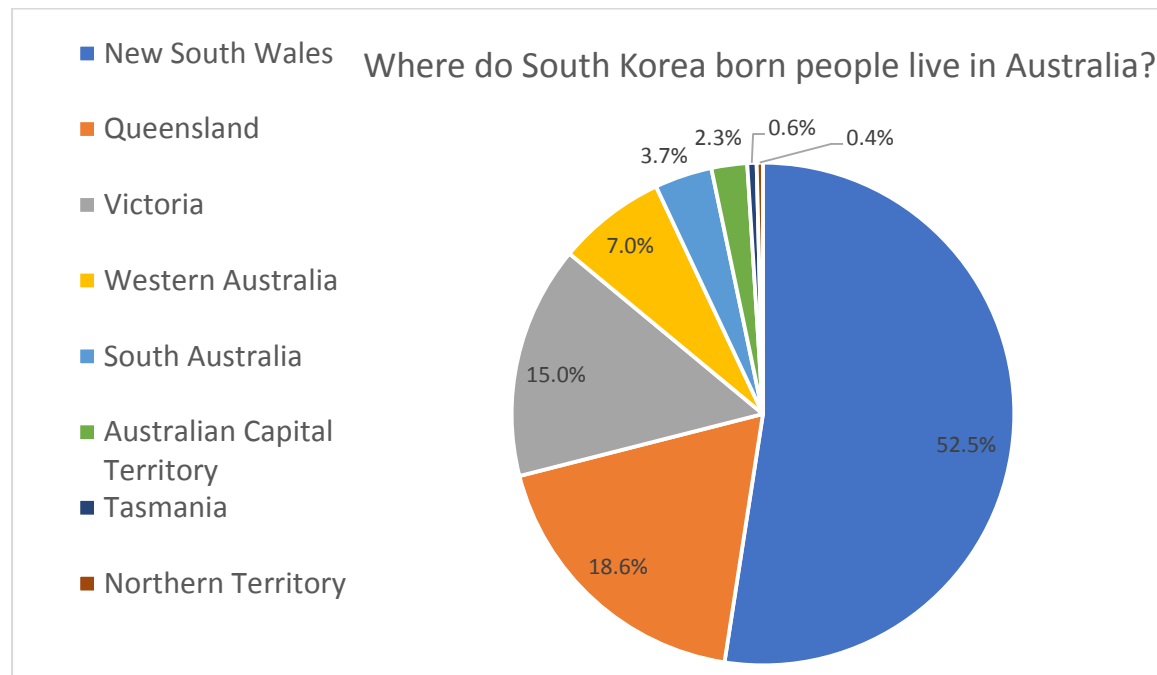
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## 4.5 Korean Community in Australia

Over half of the almost 110,000 people living in Australia who speak Korean at home live in NSW. There are smaller communities in Victoria and Queensland, followed by the other states and territories. Most Korean Australians have migrated from or had parents who migrated from South Korea. Higher English proficiency levels are found among the under 35 years age group and elderly Korean Australians have lower English skills. There are slightly more women than men at 52%.



Overall Population (23,401,891)		
Population (Total)	Number	%
Korean language spoken at home	108,999	0.5%
Persons born in South Korea	98,775	0.4%

Age Groups and English Language Proficiency				
Age	Good ELP	Poor ELP	Not stated	Total
0-17	15,659	6,187	247	22,093
18-35	31,741	10,752	267	42,760
36-64	24,519	13,978	321	38,818
65+	2,294	5,039	62	7,395
Total	74,213	35,956	897	111,066

Country of Birth of Parents	
Mother	Father
North Korea (343)	North Korea (437)
South Korea (120,878)	South Korea (116,046)

Annual Income	
Total Annual Income	Total
Nil	21,355
Up to \$33,799	30,858
\$33,800 - \$90,999	30,226
\$91,000 - \$155,999	4,038
\$156,000+	1,166

Sex	
Male	Female
52,311	56,686

## Cultural Background

This technologically aware, highly educated young generation is also overwhelmingly Westernised and has grown individualistic as a result. A split of familial ideals has emerged as they become less family-focused. Under Confucian values, age defines seniority in the household and overrides a person's personal virtue or merit.

Up until 1991, both South and North Koreans were counted as 'Korean' in the Australian census. The Korean population in Australia was quite low up until the late 1960s when the White Australia Policy was softened. At the end of the Vietnam War (1975), many Koreans working for military contract firms moved to Australia. Some were granted permanent residency status and an increase in sponsored migration. From 1986 to 1991, there was a significant rise in Korean migrants, many coming under the skilled and business migration categories.

More than half of the Korea-born population in Australia has arrived within the last ten years. This includes students seeking educational opportunities in Australia. According to the 2011 census, just over half (53.1%) of the Korea-born population who are employed work in either a skilled managerial, professional or trade occupations. Indeed, families often work together in small business and will pool their capital together to purchase a home, particularly in Victoria.

About half of the Korea-born population identifies with some form of Christianity (at least 54.1%). Within Australia, many members often see Korean churches as a focal point of Korean culture and assists in maintaining traditions through dance, language, and cuisine. The Korean community also flourishes through language schools, Korean language broadcasts on SBS and the several Korean magazines and newspapers around the country.

## Cultural attitudes towards water recreation

Knowledge about attitudes towards water recreation in South Korea is very limited. An emphasis on education attainment within Korean culture leaves limited time for many people to play sports including water based. For young people after school time is often spent studying.

Emerging water sport activities recognise a trend in high involvement with the Korean tourism market. Water sports such as windsurfing, rafting and sailing are commonly offered in cultural



tours and significantly promoted during Summer for visitors from overseas. There is a lack of local community engagement as all water sport activities are held at paid facilities and have limited free for use public access.

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## Appendix 1. Case study interview discussion guide

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### Case Studies Interview discussion guide

*Context (these details will be asked of the community contact prior to the session to gather information regarding the group characteristics)*

- *Where do they live? Which state? Regional or urban?*
- *Where were they born? How long have they lived in Australia?*
- *Are they an Australian citizen? A permanent resident? If not, what visa category do they hold?*
- *How old are they? Do they speak a LOTE at home? How would they describe their English proficiency levels for reading?*
- *Do they have children/grandchildren? Other family in Australia?*

#### 1. Introduction

Explain purpose of the interview and the project.

Thank you for taking part in this interview. We are working with Royal Life Saving Australia on this project. Royal Life Saving Australia is a community organisation dedicated to reducing drowning. They have recently released a report on their 10-year national study on drowning deaths in Australia for people who were born overseas.

We are conducting interviews to develop 10 case studies for Royal Life Saving Australia to use in their project/conference/seminars. Your story will form part of that group of case studies.

We are going to talk today about your experience of water and swimming since you have been in Australia.

Let's begin.

#### 2. Water participation

I'm going to ask you some questions about your own participation in what we call 'water recreation'. Today when we talk about 'water' we are talking about the ocean/harbour OR river/creak/stream OR beach recreation. This might be swimming at the beach, or in a river, or spending time at the beach, or picnicking next to a river or waterhole, or going boating or fishing. Anything you might do in your spare time that is close to or in water.

Do you ever spend time near water? Where do you go?

Do you ever swim in the ocean or harbour? At the beach? In rivers, creeks or streams?

If you do swim, do you check about safety before you go into the water? If yes, how? (prompt: read the signs, check where the flags are at the beach, do some online research)

How much swimming did you do before you lived in Australia?

What other activities do you do near the water? (prompt: picnics, fishing, boating, walking on rocks, watching others swim)

If you watch others swim, do you make sure they know how to swim in the ocean/harbour/rivers etc?

### 3. Cultural attitudes to water recreation

I want to talk about what water recreation is like in XXX (insert country of origin).

Was going to the beach something you did? Very often? What did you do at the beach?

Did you ever spend time near rivers, creeks or streams? What did you do?

What about spending time on the ocean or harbours? Did you go boating? Did you go fishing?

Where you taught to swim? Who by? (prompt: parents, family members, at school, private lessons)

Is water recreation (prompt with what we mean if necessary) popular in XXX (insert country of origin)?  
What do people do?

Did everybody get involved? Or was it just some people? (prompt: mainly the children, mainly the men, mainly the younger people)

Where there any barriers that stopped you or other people from swimming? Was that in public only?  
Or at beaches only?

What safety precautions do people take around being near or in the water in XXX (insert country of origin)?

### 4. Personal experience

I want to talk about your experiences since you have lived in Australia.

Do you go to the beach now you live in Australia? Do you swim? What else do you do? Is that different to before living here?

Do you spend time near rivers/creeks/streams now? Do you swim? What else do you do? Is that different to before you lived here?

Do you ever go boating or fishing on the ocean or harbour? What else do you do? Is that different to before you lived here?

Do you choose to do these activities because you have always done this? Or because you now live in Australia?

Do you consume alcohol when you are around water? Does anyone who is with you? Do they then go in the water?

[if they have children/grandchildren] Are your children/grandchildren learning to swim? Where?

When you are at the beach, do you know what the flags are for?

Do you ever read the signs at the beach? Near the river?

Would you ask someone at the beach in a uniform for help? Do you know what they are there for?

Do you or does anyone in your family regularly take any medication? Or have an existing medical condition? Do you understand how some health conditions or medications may affect your ability in or near the water?

5. Close

Is there anything else you would like to add about your experiences with water recreation overseas? In Australia? Or any particular that you or your family/friends do at or around water that is specific to your culture?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you for taking part in this interview.

## Appendix 2. Interviews

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In addition to the participants in the ten case studies, the following people were interviewed for this research.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
David Holland, Manager of Multicultural projects	Life Saving Victoria
Lauren Nimmo, Research and Health Promotion Manager	Royal Life Saving WA
Matt Griffiths, Aquatic programs manager	Royal Life Saving NSW
Jacqui Rousseau, Programs Coordinator	Royal Life Saving ACT
Jared Wilson, General Manager Operations	AUSTSWIM
Associate Professor Rob Brander, Deputy Head of School, School of Biological Earth and Environmental Sciences	University of UNSW