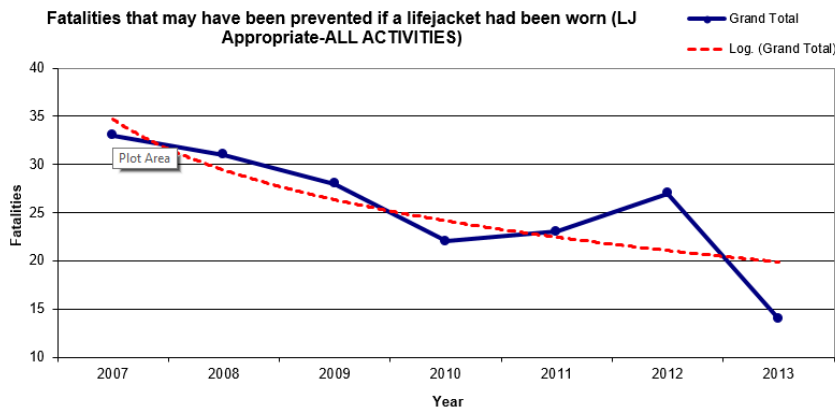


2013 sees reduction in number of lives that might have been saved by lifejacket wear

Once a year the Casualty Review Panel discusses the circumstances surrounding fatal maritime incidents, and provides its opinion about whether a lifejacket or buoyancy aid might have saved a person's life. In 2013, 12 lives may have been saved by wearing a lifejacket or buoyancy aid. The panel

suggested that increasing awareness of the benefits of wearing a lifejacket, may have helped to reduce the lives lost where lack of buoyancy was a contributory factor. The graph below shows this downward trend over the last seven years.



The panel is of the opinion that there are a number of factors in addition to wearing a lifejacket or buoyancy aid that may contribute towards reducing maritime fatalities, these are as follows:

- Carrying a means of raising the alarm, for example: personal locator beacon (PLB); emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB); digital selective calling (DSC) VHF radio; mobile phone (only as a back-up as signal coverage is poor); marine flares.
- Undertaking the appropriate training for your activity.
- Knowing how to call for help in an emergency.
- Being suitably dressed for the activity and weather conditions at the time: for example, wearing thermal protection if appropriate.
- Being aware of the availability of public rescue equipment at the location i.e. life rings.
- Checking the weather and tides before you set out.
- Knowing what will happen to you on entering and remaining in the water.

Alarm, Learning, Information, Finding, Experience, Saved (A LIFE SAVED)

Below are some examples of incidents discussed by the panel, which led to these conclusions:

A 62 year old man fell overboard from his kayak. He was not properly clothed and slipped through his lifejacket which had failed to keep his head above water. If he had been wearing a properly fitting lifejacket and had a means of calling for help his life may have been saved.

A 35 year old man, who was not wearing a lifejacket or buoyancy aid, was washed into the sea near Portrush during an angling trip. The sea state was described as 'rough' at the time of the incident. His life may have been saved if he had been wearing a lifejacket or buoyancy aid.

A 60 year old yachtsman fell overboard from his tender, he was not wearing a lifejacket. His life may have been saved if he had been wearing a lifejacket or buoyancy aid.

