

IRISH WATER SAFETY

PRESS RELEASE

12 Jan 2015

IRELAND TO HOST MAJOR DROWNING PREVENTION FORUM

THREE-DAY FOCUS ON SAVING LIVES FROM DROWNING

*372,000 people drown each year worldwide - that's 42 every hour**

International safety standards of water rescue, resuscitation and water safety will be discussed when Irish Water Safety hosts the board of International Life Saving Europe (ILSE) for an Extraordinary General Assembly, annual commission meetings and best practice seminar in Dublin on January 15th – 17th.

This is the first time that Ireland has ever hosted these meetings with just fewer than 100 delegates arriving from across Europe. Minister of State at the Departments of An Taoiseach and Defence, Paul Kehoe is due to welcome our European guests.

“The vast majority of drowning incidents and aquatic injuries are preventable”, commented Minister Kehoe, “International Life Saving Europe, of which Irish Water Safety plays a key role, has assisted in making aquatic activities safer here in Ireland, throughout Europe and globally.”

The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) is the world authority for drowning prevention, lifesaving and lifesaving sport. ILS leads supports and collaborates with national and international organisations engaged in drowning prevention, water safety, water rescue, lifesaving, lifeguarding and lifesaving sport. Its headquarters are in Leuven in Belgium. The Presidency of the ILSE is currently with Germany which is the largest of all the European member federations.

ILS decentralises its affairs under the management of four Regional Branches. The Branches are established in and for Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe and are responsible for initiating, supervising and coordinating regional activities.

The Best Practice Seminar will take place on Friday 16th of January where a number of presentations and workshops on drowning prevention will take place from Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway. Subjects will include: No sharks in Swiss rivers, which is an educational programme for children; a family water safety pilot project in Norway; marketing as an educational tool and water safety awareness programmes.

Irish Water Safety, The Long Walk, Galway; LoCall 1890-420.202 www.iws.ie; Tel: 091-564400 Fax: 091-564700

Mobiles: John Leech: 087-6789600; Roger Sweeney: 087-6789601

* World Health Organization Global Report on Drowning 2014.