



“Just In Time” Rescue Award GUIDELINES

VERSION 1.0 JULY 2020

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Introduction

Ireland is surrounded by water and is blessed to have many beautiful beaches, rivers and lakes for our enjoyment. Unfortunately, water can also be a source of great danger. Through its many programmes, Water Safety Ireland encourages water users of all ages to learn how to avoid dangers in the water and to know what safe actions they can take to assist somebody who gets into immediate difficulties.

Save a life ... Learn Lifesaving Skills

This document gives outline details and guidelines for the Water Safety Ireland Just In Time Awards scheme. These awards recognise courageous rescue interventions, carried out by ordinary people, to assist persons in immediate danger in the water. This scheme is organised and operated by Water Safety Ireland which are kindly sponsored by SEIKO.

Guidelines

The aims of this document are:

- To formally define the purpose of the Water Safety Ireland Rescue Awards and the SEIKO Ireland “Just in Time” award scheme;
- To stipulate the process by which applications for the nominations will be received, prepared, examined and processed;
- To define the form of the award;
- To explain the manner in which Awards are to be presented.



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The Purpose of the Award Scheme – Formal Definition

*“To provide a unique, national recognition
of timely and exemplary rescue interventions,
in situations where persons are in grave and imminent danger,
within an aquatic environment,
and where the urgent local assistance is clearly required,
of the ordinary individuals immediately present at the scene,
prior to the arrival of
the relevant regular aquatic emergency service units”*

Further Clarifications

The following points are intended to provide further definition and clarification to the above statement of purpose of the scheme:

- **“national recognition”**: A Water Safety Ireland award citation and/or an appropriate physical gift from SEIKO Ireland, will be presented to successful awardees, at an annual national ceremony.
- **“timely”**: means immediate actions taken by those present at the scene, which are considered necessary and appropriate to prevent serious trauma, or loss of life of the all involved, prior to the arrival of the appropriate regular emergency services
- **“exemplary”**: means that, with the benefit of hindsight and with sufficient time to consider all relevant factors, experienced aquatic rescue personnel would regard the decisions made, within the very short time period available and the rescue actions taken by those at the scene of the incident, as being excellent and appropriate examples of the optimum safe response interventions of ordinary individuals
- **“grave and imminent danger”**: This phrase comes directly from the internationally recognised definition of distress in the maritime environment and has the same generally accepted meaning in the context of this scheme
- **“the aquatic environment”** shall include but not necessarily be limited to:
 - Immersion within any body of water, including the sea, rivers, lakes, natural and artificial ponds, swimming pools or in any other ponds or containments of water, capable of causing trauma, drowning, or death in any way
 - Within, or on, any vessel, watercraft, or any means of floatation, upon such bodies of water



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or

- On the shoreline, beaches, banks, cliffs, structures or any forms of water containment, where the relevant hazard is primarily posed by the adjacent aquatic source
- **“urgent assistance”**: means any or all immediate actions, which are absolutely necessary to preserve life, to prevent further injury or to promote the recovery of the casualties, prior to the arrival on scene of the relevant and more competent regular emergency service units.
- **“by ordinary individuals”**: this award system is intended specifically to recognise the actions of any ordinary persons, who, whilst going about their normal activities, unexpectedly encounter emergency situations and react in such a way which contributes significantly to the rescue intervention.
- **“relevant regular aquatic emergency service units”**: Just in time awards are primarily intended for timely and immediately necessary interventions, prior to the arrival on scene of the regular aquatic emergency service units. Rescues carried out by any of the regular emergency service organisation, which are “Declared Search and Rescue Units” under a National Search and Rescue Plan, and which are specifically equipped and trained to provide **aquatic rescue interventions**, are generally excluded from the “Just In Time” Awards Scheme, as they are eligible under separate award schemes.

However, the immediate rescue interventions by personnel from other emergency services, who are not trained or specifically equipped by their organisations to perform the “aquatic” rescue response intervention are eligible. Please refer to the paragraphs on “Eligibility” for more details.



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Eligibility

The actions of the following persons are eligible for consideration for awards:

Any or all ordinary persons who undertook, or assisted in, an emergency intervention, within the aquatic environment of the Republic of Ireland (as defined above)

Or similarly, any Irish citizens [or nationalised Irish residents], who similarly undertook, or assisted in, a relevant emergency intervention within any international aquatic environment.

Notes: Gardai, Ambulance or Fire Services personnel, or other regular emergency services personnel, who may be present at the scene of an emergency incident, and who personally made emergency aquatic interventions, would also be eligible for nomination within this particular award scheme, where their regular role, duties, or training, do not involve such rescue activities.

Cases involving trained maritime emergency responders providing aquatic rescue interventions outside of the scope of their normal operational units and within the context of their ordinary independent civilian lives, may also be considered as being eligible under this scheme. The decisions on such cases should be referred directly to the Rescue Commission of Water Safety Ireland for consideration.

Nominations

Members of the public, any agency, organisation, or service, including Water Safety Ireland personnel, may submit accounts of incidents which they believe are worthy for consideration for the award. Applications for award consideration should be submitted in the form of a report on the incident, giving the as much detail as is available to them. Please refer to the guidance given which may be obtained from WSI HQ or downloaded from the Water Safety Ireland WSI website on <https://watersafety.ie/?s=seiko>. Reports can either be mailed to “Rescue Awards”, Water Safety Ireland HQ, Long Walk, Galway, or e-mailed to info@iws.ie



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Form of the Award

The Award will may take the form of a Seiko watch or glassware and/or a certificate, citing the rescue service performed, from WSI.

Presentation of the Award

The Award will be presented at the WSI Awards Ceremony, which will take place each year.

If an award is made, the recipient may be subjected to publicity in the relevant public and social media.

The Assessment Process

- 1 Reports of incidents received at Water Safety Ireland HQ will be sent to the appropriate Water Safety Area Committee for investigations and approval (see Guidance Notes Appendix).
- 2 The Water Safety Area Committee has primary responsibility for the preparation of recommendations for the possible granting of the Award.
- 3 Where the reported case involves a rescue intervention outside of the Republic of Ireland, Water Safety Ireland Headquarters will refer the application to the Water Safety Area Committee where the recipient is resident . In these cases, because of the obvious difficulties posed to the Committee in conducting the due level of validation, the applicant must provide as much prima-facia evidence, photographs and first-hand witness testimonials as possible with the original application, to assist in this process.
- 4 When investigating a rescue service, particular care must be taken not to give any indication of the recommendation that may be made or the possible outcome of the investigation.
- 5 Recommendations from the Area Committee should provide a full description of the circumstances and events giving rise to the nomination. See Guidance Notes Appendix).
- 6 Speed in assessing a rescue service meriting the Award is essential. This must be a top priority to undertake these investigations when requested to do so. As a



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general rule the Area Committee should complete their preparation of recommendations in four weeks and return them to WSI HQ for attention of the Executive Officer responsible.

- 7 The Chief Executive has the final responsibility for endorsing and submitting the Area Committee's recommendations to the WSI Rescue Commission.
- 8 The Rescue Commission will examine and decide upon all recommendations submitted to it by the Chief Executive.
- 9 The decision of the Rescue Commission will be final and there will be no leave to appeal that decision.



APPENDIX

Additional Guidance Notes for Water Safety Area Committees (WSAC)

A recommendation for a Rescue Award may necessitate the following actions to be carried out by members of the WSAC:

- A visit to the location
- The interviewing of the rescuers, rescued, witnesses and any others who can provide proof of the rescue and/or of participants,
- Confirmation of the details listed in each section of the Application Form
- Confirmation of the completion of Sections A-D of the Application Form, supported by all other available documentation.
- The completion of Section E of the Application Form

In addition to the guidance given to members of the public initially reporting the incident (see “Reporting cases of exemplary water rescue interventions”) The following additional guidance may help the Water Safety Area Committee in making its recommendations.

Description

- A chronological / time-lined description of the incident and intervention
- A list of **ALL** persons involved, with contact details, if possible

Location of the incident:

- A map or sketch with scale.
- Photographs of the locations
- Others involved in the rescue service:

Prevailing conditions – check with independent source:

- wind strength and direction,
- Sea state and nature of waves
- Visibility / spray/rain/snow
- Daylight or darkness
- Air and water temperature
- Tide times (high/low)(if applicable)



Skills display:

- Situational awareness
- Awareness of immediate risks to the casualty / casualties
- Use of initiative and personal experience in formulating an intervention plan
- Use of local knowledge
- Recognition of limitations of personal skills and experiences
- alertness,
- full and proper use of all available resources, such as ringbuoys, ropes, throwlines and other simple rescue equipment and techniques.
- adaptability in rapidly changing circumstances,
- swimming/ lifesaving,
- first aid and/or rendering medical assistance,

Leadership demonstrated:

- how the rescue was approached,
- rescuer has and displays confidence,
- knowledge,
- intelligence,
- Charisma and humanity shown to casualty

Determination to conduct the rescue operation:

- resoluteness
- How often did the rescuer have to go in the water?

Courage demonstrated:

- Comprehension of the levels of personal risk involved in intervening
- Bravery or boldness.

Degree of risk to human lives involved:

- hazards,
- fishing nets,
- flotsam & jetsam,
- Condition of rescued or recovered person.

Nearest land, sea or beach rescue service:



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What Emergency Services were involved:

Did other members of the public help the recipient:

Any other information supporting the nomination:

Did the rescued person survive: