

0999 NATIONAL WATER SAFETY FORUM – ‘WORKING TOGETHER FOR WATER SAFETY’

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This presentation considers the challenges and achievements within the UK National Water Safety Forum (NWSF), and in particular through the development of its critical project; the Water Accident Incident Database (WAID). A Government review that considered roles and responsibilities for inland water safety in 2003 offered two key recommendations: (i) That a joined up approach to water safety involving the Government, NGO's, industry and key at risk groups be established, and that (ii) accurate, timely and agreed data pertaining to water incidents be developed. At the time there were a number of challenges to address. These include several committees and databases sometimes offering overlapping and contrary outputs. Competing interests and the natural conflict between those who regulate and create risk are also issues. In some cases decisions regarding appropriate and proportionate response to issues were not always based on good evidence. The establishment of the NWSF is driving an increasingly shared vision for water safety in the UK. This is based upon shared principles and evidence base. There will always be discourse on how we get there; but there is agreement in the community for the continuing need to be 'working together for water safety'.