



Using Your Resources Effectively

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ABOUT ISRM CONSULTANTS

- ISRM's Consultancy Arm
- Contract with QLM Ltd to deliver consultancy services
- 17 years track record within industry
- New consultancy services launched February 2008

What do we mean by Resources?

- Focus for purpose of presentation on staffing resources
- Presentation relates particularly to lifeguards and how they may be used most efficiently;
- Use of technology also considered;

Why are these important?

- Staffing and energy costs are a significant proportion of leisure centre costs – particularly true in swimming pools;
- Gas and electricity costs have increased in cost by 63.5% and 47.3% between 2003 - 2007;
- Places severe pressures on delivering services within overall budgets;
- Often staffing budgets looked at for compensatory savings;

ISRM Consultancy service delivers.....

- Lifeguard Review
- Staffing reviews
- Energy efficiency Audits
- Plant reviews
- Presentation will focus on best practice examples from recent projects undertaken

Lifeguard Review: The Objective

- To review the numbers and positions of lifeguards for programmed and unprogrammed sessions operated at the pool in line with current industry standards, expectations and experience and to make recommendations for improvements in **effectiveness and efficiency** where applicable.

Lifeguard Review: How we do it

- Review of pool programme for every hour of operation by activity type;
- Review of staffing levels for every hour of operation;
- Review PSOP for site and Risk Assessments;
- Consider arrangements in light of industry guidance & best practice identified throughout UK;

Industry Guidance

- Based on Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools;
- Use Safe Supervision for Teaching and Coaching of Swimming;
- ISRM Policy and Information Notes – excellent sources of information

Review of Pool Programme

- Identify types of session;
- Programmed sessions / Unprogrammed sessions and mix;
- Review in detail arrangements for lane swimming, swimming lessons (education and centre run), special sessions eg play equipment, canoeing and sub-aqua;

Review of Staff Numbers

- Starting point those recommended in *Managing Safety in Swimming Pools* for particular sized pools;
- But variations possible where numbers, qualifications and risk assessments support it;
- Swimming lessons – Rescue Test for Teachers and in programmed sessions;

Beware!

- Lifeguard numbers may go up as well as down!
- Recent case study – no lifeguard cover provided for significant number of sessions;
- Review identified staff supervising had no valid qualifications;
- Purpose of review efficiency and effectiveness, not purely cost cutting;

Case Study 1: Scottish Leisure Trust

- Review of lifeguarding arrangements throughout entire organisation – 9 sites;
- Expectation that £30,000 in savings would be identified;
- Identified £130,000 in actual savings – 9 FTE posts;
- NOP revised at the same time to ensure new lifeguarding arrangements embedded in organisation's PSOP;

Case Study 2: English Local Authority

- Reviewed whole staffing structure from senior management to front line staff;
- No expectation of financial savings – driven by developing structure to deliver high quality services;
- Identified consistent level of lifeguarding staff regardless of programme operated and consistent throughout very varied centres;

Case Study 2: English Local Authority (cont)

- Double lifeguard staffing during swimming lessons when swimming teacher NPLQ / Rescue Test qualified;
- Same arrangements for specialised sessions eg canoeing, swimming club although external hirers also required to be qualified and trained;
- Some savings identified used to increase staff in other areas eg health and fitness;

ISRM Consultancy Lifeguard Review Service

- 1 day on site by experienced Consultant;
- Led and quality assured by Peter Mills;
- Written report produced off site;
- Independent, external validation of lifeguarding arrangements for centre;
- Assistance with re-drafting lifeguard rotas if required (at extra cost);

Using Resources Effectively: Drowning Detection Technology

- Independent appraisal of system;
- Assess potential / constraints of its use on site-specific basis;
- Costs of site assessment may be met by reduction in cost of system by supplier;
- Supported by HSE letter of support for use of new technology in appropriate circumstances;

Scottish Leisure Trust : Example

- Site specific study;
- Reviewed current staffing levels / programme, swimmer numbers and accident record;
- Compared to industry guidance;
- Reviewed 12 hours of pool lifeguarding standards via CCTV;
- Arranged site visit to view operation to address potential concerns;

Scottish Leisure Trust : Example (cont)

- Identified potential savings throughout opening hours – 40% reduction in lifeguard hours;
- More critically identified real issues in standards of lifeguarding at that pool – technology therefore seen as an aid to improving effectiveness of lifeguarding;
- Savings of £32,000 could be achieved;
- Payback period for system 3 years;
- System now installed and working well;

Use of Potential Revenue Savings

- Staffing / service reviews not only to address budget shortfalls;
- Attitude towards potential savings depends on local authority / organisation;
- Investment in new business development;
- Can also be used to increase staffing levels for particular sessions to improve access by certain groups eg families, people with disabilities;

Conclusions

- Pool programmes are not static, neither should lifeguard numbers;
- Starting point to be industry best practice, not to be seen purely as a cost cutting measure;
- Clear link between PSOP, Risk Assessments and lifeguarding levels;
- Technology may also be an aid to more effective lifeguarding;

Further Information

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