

## ORAL Abstract

### **Title: INTERNATIONAL LIFESAVING FEDERATION (ILS) – How, Who and What were the Impact on Brazil?**

**Principal Author:** Dr David Szpilman, MD - Medical Staff of Drowning Resuscitation Center and Aeromedical Helicopter - Fire Department of Rio de Janeiro (CBMERJ) – GMAR; Head of Adult Intensive Care Unit - Hospital Municipal Miguel Couto; Member of Brazilian National Resuscitation Council; Founder, Former President and Medical Director of Brazilian Life Saving Society – SOBRASA; BOD Member and Medical Committee of International Life-Saving Federation; BOD Member of Sports Medical Council;

#### **Abstract**

Lifesaving in Brazil was started officially in 1918, in Rio de Janeiro City, by Commodore Wilbert Longfellow from American Red Cross. Since then, lifeguards number has increased yearly to become one of the largest group of water safety professionals on duty in the world, now a days almost all from the firefighter service. Even though, it was only in 1994, at Wales United Kingdom, that Brazil officially made contact with a world lifesaving organization and curiously was exactly the time when FIS and WLS merged into the International Lifesaving Federation (ILS). The result was a great motivation to the foundation of Brazilian Lifesaving Society – SOBRASA. The objective of this Paper is to demonstrate the impact ILS has had on lifesaving in Brazil since then.

**Methods:** SOBRASA numbered, titled and gave a brief summary of all kind of events on lifesaving to which ILS may have some influence directly or indirectly with their ideas, organizations or accomplishments and the estimated number of people involved who in turn would possibly assist reduce drowning. Direct involvement means the person joining the event. Indirect involvement means the person can receive some information from a person involved directly and/or from broadcast media. To reduce the possibility of error on the estimates of indirect involvement, we underestimated using the following formulas: If no media, the estimate was calculated by [number people directly involved X 3 (family or close friends)]. If media were used, we used for local (L), [number people directly involved X 5], regional(R) X 10 or national (N) X 20.

**Results:** Events and the number of people involved directly or indirectly by ILS are shown on table 1.

**Discussion:** Quantifying the impact from some action is a very difficult task to accomplish. In this study, there are at least 10 to 30 confounding factors that make it almost impossible to attribute improvements on Brazilian lifesaving just from ILS. The best end point in this subject would be to measure the reduction of drowning in Brazil from 1995 to now, but this cannot be done without producing bias when only correlating to ILS influence. Even though, there are improvements that were considered a landmark on Brazilian lifesaving, i.e; the motivation produced by ILS to gather all the experts and professionals lifeguards in one Brazilian organization - SOBRASA. This unique action must have resulted in immeasurable but important reduction on drowning mortality since 1995. A recently completed drowning survey shows that when Brazil joined the ILS,

it has reduced the national rate of death by drowning by 23%. This means that each year there are 800 less deaths by drowning per year. This reduction, other than many different actions taken by different lifeguard firefighter services alone, has to be a result of the impact of ILS on SOBRASA, directly over 88,217 and indirectly over 661,000 Brazilians. Brazil was the seed and ILS was the water, and this relationship is flourishing as a result.

### **Three learning objectives**

1. How important is it to start a lifesaving organization?
2. How to keep it alive?
3. Does ILS have some influence on reduction of drowning in Brazil?

### **Principal Author:** Dr David Szpilman, MD

Medical Staff of Drowning Resuscitation Center and Aeromedical Helicopter - Fire Department of Rio de Janeiro (CBMERJ) – GMAR; Head of Adult Intensive Care Unit - Hospital Municipal Miguel Couto; Member of Brazilian National Resuscitation Council; Founder, Former President and Medical Director of Brazilian Life Saving Society – SOBRASA; BOD Member and Medical Committee of International Life-Saving Federation; BOD Member of Sports Medical Council;

Av. das Américas 3555, Bloco 2, sala 302. Barra da Tijuca - RJ - Brazil 22631-004

Phones 055 21 99983951

Fone/Fax 055 21 33262378 or 24307168

Email: <david@szpilman.com>

Internet: <www.szpilman.com>

### **Other Author(s): (name(s) and affiliation(s))**

Paulo Moreira Goulart – Corpo de Bombeiros Militar do Estado do Rio de Janeiro and (\*)

Onir Mocellin - Corpo de Bombeiros Militar do Estado de Santa Catarina and (\*)

Alexandre da Silva - Corpo de Bombeiros Militar do Estado de Santa Catarina and (\*)

Osni Pinto Guaiano - Corpo de Bombeiros Militar do Estado do Rio de Janeiro and (\*)

Marcelo Barros - (\*) and Physic Education Teacher.

Alex Souza Alves - Corpo de Bombeiros Militar do Estado do Rio de Janeiro and (\*)

Sr Márcio Morato - Corpo de Bombeiros Militar do Distrito Federal and (\*)

Sr Jorge Cerqueira – Salvamar da Bahia and (\*)

Jefferson José Maciel Vilela – Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo - Corpo de Bombeiros and (\*)

Carlos Eduardo Smicelato – Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo - Corpo de Bombeiros and (\*)

Rodrigo Thadeu de Araújo - Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo - Corpo de Bombeiros and (\*)

Joel Prates Pedrosa - Brigada Militar do Rio Grande do Sul – Corpo de Bombeiros and (\*)

Luís Krüger - Brigada Militar do Rio Grande do Sul – Corpo de Bombeiros and (\*)

Edmilson Barros - Polícia Militar do Estado do Paraná - Corpo de Bombeiros and (\*)

Alexandre Cerqueira – Corpo de Bombeiros do Estado do Espírito Santo and (\*)

Rômulo C. Sales – Corpo de Bombeiros do Estado do Ceará and (\*)

Neyff Souza da Silva - Corpo de Bombeiros do Estado de Pernambuco and (\*)

**(\*) Brazilian Lifesaving Society BOD Member**

	Title	Summary description	People involved		
			Directly	Media type	Indirectly(*)
1	Foundation – 1995	Brazilian Lifesaving Society – SOBRASA	400	L, R & N	8,000
2	Basic Water Life Support (BWLS)	385 Classes (1 to 2 hours lectures and demo in school, universities, shopping, gyms, hotel, condominium, water parks, congress)	26,950	L, & R	269,500
3	BWLS Advanced A	45 Classes (What to do on drowning – 4 to 5 hours)	1,080	L	5,400
4	BWLS Advanced B	43 Classes (surf-save, Beach and Pool BWLS – 9 to 13 hours)	1,075	L	5,375
5	Pool lifeguard course	8 classes (course are done only with the purpose of teaching distance area of Brazil)	243	L	1,215
6	Beach lifeguard course	1 class (course are done only with the purpose of teaching distance area of Brazil)	35	L	175
7	<a href="http://www.sobrasa.org">Web www.sobrasa.org</a>	Information on lifesaving with more than 380 gigabytes of news, photos and videos.	32,156	No one	96,468
8	Lifesaving debate on internet	A lively electronic debate, in Portuguese and Spanish, about lifesaving was started on the Internet involving more than 70 expert people from more than six Latin countries.	70	No one	210
9	Junior & volunteer lifeguard	320 volunteers from 1996 to 2001, working on weekend and holidays	320	L, R & N	6,400
10	Lifesaving school for children	Lifesaving school at he beach to children from 5 to 17 years old – 3 years duration	1,330	L, R & N	26,600
11	National Lifesaving Championship	6 events involving 15 State Lifeguard services	3,320	L, R & N	66,400
12	National Lifesaving Symposium	5 events involving 17 State Lifeguard services	2,150	L, R & N	43,000
13	Safety on aquatic events	Ruffles Big Wave championship and swimming challenger on Copacabana beach – ABMN	685	L, R & N	13,700
14	Lifesaving vacation time	1 event to children from 7 to 18 years old during vacation (22 days long, from 8 to 11 PM) – Guaratiba - RJ	54	L	270
15	Inter-school lifesaving championship	2 pool inter-school lifesaving championship to children from 8 to 15 years old	234	L	1170
16	Water Planet SOBRASA Radio Program	Private modulate frequency with 1 hour long, daily, for a year about lifesaving – Quebra-Mar Radio F.M.	15000	L	75000
17	Hyowa	7 Water therapy and exercise in the pool	154	No one	462
18	National and international publication on drowning	194 National and international drowning books, manuals, papers, reports, communications, abstracts and chapters published	194	L, R & N	3,880
19	Lifeguard manual	147 Electronic Lifeguard Manual with over 450 pages, in CD, sold or gifted.	147	No one	441
20	Drowning book	1,000 edition sold	1000	L	5,000
21	International Exchange information	14 Conferences, meetings/visits to Spain, UK, Belgium, Netherlands, Hungarian, Argentina, Uruguai, Venezuela and USA.	1620	L, R & N	32,400
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>88,217</b>		<b>661,066</b>

Table 1 - Events involvement and their directly or indirectly influence by ILS from 1995 to 2006; (\*) number of people involved indirectly are estimative based on media type. Media type was referred as Local (L), Regional(R) or National (N).