



WORLD
AQUATICS

OPEN WATER SWIMMING MANUAL

2024 EDITION

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1. PREFACE

This resource is intended to assist in the training and skill development of technical officials in the conduct of Open Water Swimming Competitions to ensure the consistent interpretation and application of Rules and procedures to foster a common understanding of the operation and officiating of World Aquatics (AQUA) Open Water Swimming competitions across the globe. This could also be a useful guide for any management committee in the successful staging of Open Water Swimming events conducted under World Aquatics (AQUA) rules.

Every open water swimming event will have specific challenges depending upon the venue, type of water, start and finish points, and safety considerations. While covering these points in general terms, each organising committee should appoint local specialists to adopt the guidelines to fit their specific needs, whilst observing the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures required for the conduct of AQUA Open Water Swimming competitions, or those local events conducted under AQUA rules.

Open water swimming competition has become incredibly popular. Whether it is a 1500 m lake swim or a long-distance ocean swim, a carnival-like atmosphere usually prevails at open water events, despite the arduous demands placed on the competitors. Great respect is afforded those aquatic athletes who conquer any open water challenge. Those who organize the technical support and provide for the safety of these athletes must also be recognised for their efforts.

For many years, the majority of open water competitions were reserved for the hardy few who would specialize in specific training to overcome the special challenges they would face.

However, over the past two decades literally millions of competitors at every level have ventured into the world of open water swimming. With the increasing popularity of triathlons and the thousands of recreational and competitive open water races now offered around the world, this number continues to increase rapidly.

Many of these uninitiated competitors have little idea of what they are getting themselves into, and the hazards and potential for trouble or tragedy have multiplied. The need for efficiently organising safe swims was always an imperative, and today this imperative is all the more important.

World Aquatics (AQUA) has certainly been at the forefront of this growing phenomenon and has included Open Water Swimming in its World Championships since 1991. We have added new distances and a team event and encouraged both our National and Continental organisations to provide Championship events.

In addition, AQUA have organized numerous Open Water Clinics and Schools around the world as we grow the sport.

With the inclusion of the 10 km event for men and women in the Olympic Games' Aquatic programme from 2008, AQUA has contributed to increased interest and support for open water swimming worldwide.

This guide serves as a valuable resource to all who plan to join us in the conduct and officiating of the fantastic aquatic endeavour we know as 'Open Water Swimming'. It is intended for officials and organisers at all levels.

Inevitably, sooner or later, the unexpected will occur, and what often determines successful outcomes is knowledge of the rules and regulations, policies and procedures, their application, good judgement, and an understanding of all the roles and what is required to rectify the situation.

Competitors and Teams have respect for officials that are calm under pressure and have a fair and consistent application of the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

Although all care has been taken in the preparation and compilation of this information as a guide, AQUA is not responsible for any inaccuracies, nor for any loss or negligence arising from its use.

AQUA acknowledges the assistance of British Swimming, Australian Swimming, New South Wales (Australia) Swimming, and previous cohorts of the AQUA Technical Open Water Swimming Committee in the preparation of this guide.

AQUA welcomes your feedback and will consider any recommendations for inclusion for future editions. Please write to openwater@worldaquatics.org

INTRODUCTION

WORLD AQUATICS OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES

Rules regarding the conduct of Open Water Swimming events are covered in a number of places, and a check should be made of the World Aquatics website www.worldaquatics.com/rules prior to competitions to ensure the current versions of all Rules, Bylaws and Regulations are referenced.

WORLD AQUATICS RULEBOOKS

- World Aquatics' Constitution – set out the structure and governance of AQUA (valid from 30.01.2023)
- World Aquatics' Competition Regulations – apply to all sports within AQUA (valid from 05.07.2023 & updated on 01.01.2024)
- World Aquatics' By-Laws (valid from 01.01.2023)
- World Aquatics' Integrity Code

BYLAWS - Detailed policies outlining the implementation of specific regulations and policies adopted by AQUA.

COMPETITION REGULATIONS – In addition to the general Competition Regulations, there may be additional detailed policies and operational procedures relating to a specific competition format (AQUA Open Water World Cup Series) and safety for AQUA Open Water Swimming competitions.

By-Laws and Competition Regulations are approved by the AQUA Bureau at any time. For Open Water Swimming proposals would be considered by the TOWSC Commission. Proposed changes can come from the TOWSC and Federations. In the past this was only done at General and Technical Congresses of AQUA in which all Federations participate. By-Laws and Regulations are approved by the World Aquatics Bureau.

In World Aquatics latest version of the Competition Regulations (01-Jan-24). **Part One** are rules that are applicable to all Aquatic Sports, **Part Three** are rules that are specific to Open Water Swimming, and when referring to a particular rule it will be prefaced with 'Article' and then the particular rule number.

TECHNICAL RULES

World Aquatics (AQUA) defines Open Water Swimming as:

OPEN WATER SWIMMING is defined as any competition that takes place in rivers, lakes, oceans or water channels or any other body of open water.

The minimum age for all AQUA Open Water Swimming events must be at least 14 years. The age for all competitors will be considered as at 31st December of the year of the competition.

There are as many types of open water swimming events as there are waves in the ocean. Rough water or open water swimming events normally occur in bodies of water such as an ocean, lake, or river, although man-made quarries, ponds, rowing courses, reservoirs and the like are also used.

All courses used for open water swimming events must provide a safe environment for the competition with ready access to the shore at frequent points along the course so that competitors suffering any distress can be quickly assessed and treated.

OCEAN SWIMS

Ocean races have become increasingly popular. Some ocean swims can feature a mass start on the beach with a short run into the water. The course then:

- Parallels the beach; or
- Goes out to or around a fixed point such as a pier or island; or

- Circles a closed course marked by buoys; or
- Follows a course that is a combination of any of the above.

In some races there is a final run up the beach to the finish line. All AQUA events must start either with a dive from a fixed platform or in the water, and finish in the water (**AQUA Rules do not apply to beach/land starts and finishes**).

In determining the type of course for an event, the topography and environment of the race should be a guide. For example, if there is a strong current running along the beach, it may be best to swim wide.

If there is no access to marker buoys, a closed course may not be feasible. Whatever course is chosen, sufficient boats and personnel are needed to patrol a marked course off the shoreline to provide the necessary safety support, supervision, and monitoring.

A point-to-point course may require a higher number of boats to provide the necessary level of support as the field spreads during the race, whereas a small, circuit course will require more laps but can be better controlled within a confined area.

Keep in mind that a parallel point-to-point course usually does not finish where it starts, while most circuit courses generally do. A parallel course will require more facilities and co-ordination between the start and finish.

Safety should always be the ultimate deciding factor in choosing a course for an open water competition.

LAKE AND RIVER SWIMS

The same course as in ocean swimming exists in lakes, rivers, dams, or rowing courses:

- Parallel to a shore; or
- To and around a pier, rock, island, or other identifiable landmark; or
- Around a closed course marked by buoys; or
- Point-to-point.

These types of swims are usually easier to organise than ocean events since the variables of ocean swimming are greater. Conditions in lakes or rivers remain more constant. In a river, make sure the strength of the current and the course distance are taken into account to estimate the elapsed swimming time.

COMPETITION CONDUCT

AQUA has identified a number of roles as being necessary for the effective conduct of Open Water Swimming competitions. Some of these roles require involvement from early in the planning of the competition whilst other operational roles require involvement for a much shorter time-span - from the Technical and Safety briefings through until they are released from their duties by the Chief Referee following the conclusion of the competition.

2. OFFICIALS

The following officials shall be appointed at Open Water Swimming competitions:

- A Chief Referee (one per race)
- Referees (2 minimum, additional Referees proportional to race entries)
- Chief Timekeeper plus 2 Timekeepers
- Chief Finish Judge plus 2 Finish Judges
- Safety Officer
- Medical Officer
- Course Officer
- Clerk of the Course
- Race Judges (one per competitor) except for events with a course of 10 km or less
- Turn Judges (one per alteration of Course)
- Feeding Platform Judge (when feeding platforms are used)
- Relay Judges
- Starter

- Announcer
- Recorder

NOTE: No official can act in more than one role simultaneously. They may only undertake a new role after all of the obligations of their previous role have been fulfilled.

For AQUA Events, the Chief Referee, Safety Officer, and Medical Officer need to work collaboratively with the AQUA Technical, Safety and Medical Delegates to ensure all relevant rules, regulations, and other event criteria are fulfilled.

The need to focus on the race and ensuring the competitors are well managed throughout the event means that technical officials may not act in more than one capacity simultaneously. Officials may only undertake a new duty once all of the responsibilities of their initial posting have been fulfilled.

Unless a particular role requires an official on-site earlier, officials should be at the venue at least 90 minutes before the start of the competition. Upon arrival officials must report to the Chief Referee (or the Referee delegated this task) and receive an updated start list, and any special instructions as to their duties and assignment.

Open Water Swimming races are held in the natural environment and elements, so planning needs to include preparations for all climatic conditions that may be experienced during the competition:

- Suitable clothing that provides protection from the elements. Protection from sun, wind, temperature, and rain should all be considered.
- Sunscreen hat, and sunglasses.
- Refreshment – water and food if not provided by the organisers.
- Life jacket – if not provided by the organisers.
- Sealing plastic bags – to keep papers, phone, etc dry.

If assigned to a boat, remember many craft are not necessarily well equipped with bathroom facilities, so it is a good idea to take the opportunity to use the bathroom before going out on the water.

Good preparation is worth the time to make you more comfortable and better able to undertake and focus on the necessary duties assigned during the race. If you are cold, or sunburnt, or dehydrated, it is easy for focus to move to the messages from the body rather than remain concentrated on the race. In case of serious health condition of the official, the attention of the safety boat should be sought.

3. DUTIES OF OFFICIALS

3.1 CHIEF REFEREE

The Chief Referee shall:

- 3.1.1 have full control and authority over all officials and shall approve their assignments and instruct them regarding all special features or regulations related to the competition. The Chief Referee shall enforce all the Rules and decisions of World Aquatics and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the competition, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by these Rules.
- 3.1.2 ensure that all necessary officials for the conduct of the competition are at their respective posts. The Chief Referee may appoint substitutes for any who are absent, incapable of acting or found to be inefficient, and may appoint additional officials if considered necessary.
- 3.1.3 have authority to intervene in the competition at any stage to ensure that World Aquatics Rules are observed.
- 3.1.3.1 in case of hazardous conditions that jeopardize the safety of the competitors and the officials, in conjunction with the Safety Officer they can stop the race.
- 3.1.4 adjudicate on all protests related to the competition in progress.

- 3.1.5 signal to competitors, by raised flag and short blasts on a whistle, that the start is imminent and when satisfied indicate by pointing the flag at the Starter that the competition may commence.
- 3.1.6 disqualify any competitor for any violation of the Rules that she/he personally observes, or which is reported to her/him by other authorised officials. Notwithstanding the provisions of Part Three, Article 5.3 hereof, the Chief Referee may decide to enforce the disqualification at the end of the race.
- 3.1.7 receive all reports prior to the start of the race and at the conclusion of the race from the Clerk of the Course, Recorder, Course Officer and Safety Officer to ensure all competitors are accounted for.
- 3.1.8 give a decision in cases where the Finish Judges' decision and times recorded do not agree.



The Chief Referee has ultimate oversight for the conduct of the competition, so his/her responsibilities are wide ranging. The overarching duty is to ensure that the competition is run fairly and in accordance with the rules. This means they need to be involved in the planning of the competition from an early stage to ensure all aspects of the Competition Regulations and By-Laws are respected. Close liaison with the Organising Committee, Safety Officer, Medical Officer and Course Officer is required to ensure a safe competition environment is planned and implemented.

The Chief Referee must be very familiar with the rules and should keep a current copy readily at hand for reference. Despite how well one may think they know the rules, it is always good to refer to the written copy to ensure the application is correct. The most up-to-date version can be found on the AQUA website (www.worldaquatics.com). The Chief Referee is the decision-maker in any issue, so it is important that any decisions are made fairly and impartially, with good judgement, knowledge of the rules and a sense of fair play. The rules do not cover every circumstance, so it is the best judgement of the Chief Referee to determine those matters not covered.

The Chief Referee is responsible for approving all the appointments of the officials, and ensuring they are present in the appropriate locations to conduct their duties or make replacements or reassign duties as is necessary to conform to the Rules.

In assigning the Referees their duties on the course, the Chief Referee must ensure that:

There are sufficient Referees appointed to be able to cover all the competitors across the whole of the course throughout the race;

- A Referee is present to observe the approach to the finish, and the finish.
- Sufficient Referees stay on the course to officiate the race until its conclusion when all competitors have completed the race or been removed from the water under **Part Three, Article 5.17.1**.

Where Men's and Women's races are conducted simultaneously on the course, there shall be a Chief Referee for each of the Men's and Women's events under **Part Three, Article 4.10**.

Once entries are closed, the Chief Referee should arrange with the Organising Committee to receive a copy of the start list for each event, and confirmation that all conditions of entry have been met, including the coach/feeder information and medical clearance should these be conditions of entry. The earlier any deficiencies are identified the more time there is to correct them prior to the start of the event. Because of these entry requirements, it is not recommended that any late entries be accepted. For AQUA Events, all entries must be approved by AQUA and confirmed/signed by the competitors' Federation submitting the entry.

The Chief Referee should arrive at the venue at least 2 ½ hours prior to the scheduled start of the competition to ensure all of the pre-race preparations are in order.

The Rules state that the temperature of the water shall be taken at three points around the course, with temperature being the average of temperatures recorded taken 2 hours before the Race starts by a commission comprising of a referee, a coach, and a representative of the Organising Committee under **Part Three, Article 8.1.6.3**. It is not necessary for the Chief Referee to conduct this task directly and it should be considered to delegate this responsibility to a Referee so that the Chief Referee can remain on shore to be available and coordinate the necessary pre-race activities.

Once all competitors have reported and been checked and numbered, the Chief Referee should receive the report from the Clerk of the Course confirming the final start list of competitors for the event and ensure that this information is conveyed to all officials, including safety and medical officers.

Prior to the presentation of the competitors for the start, the Chief Referee confirms with the Safety Officer and the Medical Officer that the course is safe, then brief the competitors and race officials on any special aspects of the race including anticipated weather conditions, any changes since the Technical Meeting including any identified hazards on the course, the water temperature recorded in accordance with **Part Three, Article 8.1.6.3**, and reconfirms the signal for emergency abandonment. Well organised events will have a Risk Assessment, and Safety Plan which should be available to the Chief Referee upon request. If these do not exist then the Chief Referee may decide to conduct a risk assessment and prepare a Safety Plan, copies of which may be shared with the Organising Committee for the purpose of education.

A draft Chief Referee's briefing sheet is included in the race documentation at the back of this manual.

3.2 REFEREES

The Referees shall:

- 3.2.1 have authority to intervene in competition at any stage to ensure that World Aquatics Rules are observed.
- 3.2.2 disqualify any competitor for any violation of the Rules that they personally observe.

The Referees have responsibility for ensuring the rules are followed across the whole of the course throughout the race. The Chief Referee will assign a position on the course or within the fields for each referee to conduct their responsibilities, ensuring all competitors are judged with equal attention. Referees should monitor the whole of the section of the field they are assigned, spending time watching each competitor or group before moving to the next, and then the next and so on through the field, then back through the portion of the field for which they are responsible.

Should a Referee have to leave the course for any reason (e.g., refuel or breakdown), they should inform the Chief Referee who will adjust the assignments to ensure all the competitors on the course remain under the scrutiny of the Referees covering the race.

Referees should use the whistle sparingly to ensure competitors and coaches/feeders pay attention to it when it is used. Any infringements observed should be communicated to the Chief Referee and other Referees as soon as practicable to ensure an accurate status of infringements is maintained at all times, and that should a second infringement occur, the correct call is made.

3.3 STARTER

3.3.1 The Starter shall start the race in accordance to Part Three, Article 4 following the signal by the Chief Referee.

The Starter's duties will usually be completed within a few minutes following the start of the Race, unless the start is scheduled in waves, or there are multiple events scheduled throughout the day.

Once the Starter has confirmed their appointment, they should contact the Organiser or the Chief Referee and confirm the type of starting device to be used (e.g., gun, horn – or even cannon!) and whether this will be provided by the Organisers, or the Starter needs to bring their own. The start rules also require the Starter to visually indicate the start (**Part Three, Article 4.7**), usually by lowering a flag, so the Starter should also check if this is being provided. If the Starter is unfamiliar with the operation of the starting equipment, then a time to learn the equipment operation should be arranged.

If necessary, a whistle can be used as the start signal, but this is not recommended and should only be considered as a back-up solution. It is good practice for the Starter to have a whistle available to use for the start if there is equipment failure at the start time.

Where the start is being managed in waves due to the number of participants, the Starter should liaise with the Chief Referee, Recorder, and Chief Timekeeper to confirm the delay to be applied between each wave of the start, and who will advise the Starter of the timings to ensure the starts are made to time accurately.

If there is only one set of timekeepers and the Men's and Women's races are started separately, the same method as described above can be used to start the two races.

Upon arrival at the venue, the Starter should check the starting area, and check the starting equipment, confirm whether the start will be single start or waves, and make sure they are present for the pre-race briefing to confirm the start process and answer any questions that may be required. The Clerk of the Course will keep the competitors advised of the time to go prior to the start and at an appropriate time the competitors will be presented and invited to take up their starting position, either on the starting platform, or in the water behind the start line. The in-water start may be a rope between two points that the competitors are asked to hold, or a nominal line between two points that they must remain behind until the start signal is given.

On the signal from the Chief Referee, the Starter should raise the flag above their heads at the same time as they give the start command to "Take your marks". When satisfied that the competitors are ready for the start the Starter should bring the flag down simultaneously whilst giving the audible starting signal. The sounding of the starting device needs to be coordinated with the flag reaching a predetermined point that can be seen by the Timekeepers.

If in the opinion of the Chief Referee unfair advantage had occurred at the start, the competitors may be stopped, and the competition restarted. If the rules have not been followed by the competitors, then the rules must be applied. If a competitor or competitors go in the wrong direction, as long as the instructions in the briefing have been clearly given, then there is no need to recall the competitors. The Chief Referee may also allow the start to proceed and issue a yellow or red flag to a competitor/s depending on the circumstances of the infringement as per **Part Three, Article 4.8**.

All escort and safety craft should be stationed clear of the start area to ensure no competitor experiences interference. Escort boats must navigate to pick up their competitor in such a manner as to ensure all competitors in the race are not impeded.

Once the final wave of starts is completed the Starter is free to undertake any other duties after making sure their starting equipment is safely and securely stored.

3.4 CHIEF TIMEKEEPER

The Chief Timekeeper shall:

- 3.4.1 assign at least two (2) Timekeepers to their positions for the start and finish.
- 3.4.2 ensure that a time check is made to allow all persons to synchronise their watches with the official running clocks 15 minutes before start time.
- 3.4.3 collect from each Timekeeper the time recorded for each competitor, and, if necessary, inspect their watches.
- 3.4.4 record or examine the official time for each competitor.

The Chief Timekeeper's duties are similar to a pool environment in that they are responsible for supervising the appointed timekeepers and reports to the Chief Referee on their performance, including recommendations on any replacements or additional personnel required.

Part Three, Article 3.4.1 requires 3 timekeepers, and this requirement includes the Chief Timekeeper as outlined in **Part Three, Article 3.2**.

The Chief Timekeeper needs to liaise with the Chief Referee, Recorder and Starter to ascertain the start signal/s that will be given, the time delay for any subsequent starts, and the method to be used to advise the Starter of the correct moment to give the start signal when these are time specific. Where a single set of watches is being used for events with multiple starts, the Chief Timekeeper should also note the actual time of subsequent starts so that an accurate time deduction can be made to calculate the correct time for competitors in each start wave.

The Chief Timekeeper should ensure that the manual watches have sufficient capacity to cope with all of the competitors in a field. Two additional watches are started with the primary start signal, so that these watches can be used should a stopwatch fail or be accidentally stopped.

3.5 TIMEKEEPERS

Timekeepers shall:

- 3.5.1 take the time of each competitor/s assigned. The watches must have memory and print out capability and shall be certified correct to the satisfaction of the Management Committee.
- 3.5.2 start their watches at the starting signal, and only stop their watches when instructed by the Chief Timekeeper.
- 3.5.3 promptly after each finish record the time and competitor and turn it over to the Chief Timekeeper.

Note: When Automatic Officiating Equipment is used, the same complement of hand timers is to be used.

The finish may be a vertical wall, a line suspended above the water or a virtual line between two points/buoys. Timekeepers time all of the competitors in the race, using the lap/split timing function of their stopwatch. The button should be pushed for every competitor in the field, even when they arrive as a group, so the count of times matches the number and relative order of finish. Where printing stopwatches are used it is useful to write the number of a competitor next to their corresponding time every so often to assist in matching the correct times with the correct competitors.

Timekeepers must not act as judges under any circumstances. The watches need to have sufficient memory capacity to be able to record times for all of the competitors in the race – if the number of competitors exceeds the capacity of the available watches, then two sets of timekeepers should be considered, and the field split accordingly (e.g. separate sets for male and female). Note this could increase the difficulty of accuracy of timing the finishes, and also being able to distinguish between male and female competitors, so would need to be considered with caution.

Where Automatic Officiating equipment is used, **Part Three, Article 8.2.1** applies in determining a competitor's official time and place. For this reason, times are not provided to competitors or their representatives until after the recorder has compiled the results and these have been checked and confirmed by the Chief Referee.

Timekeepers need to ensure they have means of travelling to the finish area if this is a separate location to the start.

A draft Timekeepers summary sheet is included in the race documentation at the back of this manual.

3.6 CHIEF FINISH JUDGE

The Chief Finish Judge shall:

- 3.6.1 assign each Judge to a position.
- 3.6.2 record and communicate any decision received from the Referees during the competition.
- 3.6.3 collect after the race, signed results sheets from each Finish Judge and establish the result and placing which shall be sent directly to the Recorder.
- 3.6.4 confirm to each Race Judge their escort boat and instruct them in their duties.
- 3.6.5 collect after the race, signed sheets from each Race Judge of their observations during the race which shall be sent directly to the Recorder.

The Chief Finish Judge is responsible for supervising the appointed Finish Judges and reports to the Chief Referee on their performance, including recommendations on any replacements or additional personnel required.

The finish area needs to be checked to ensure there is a clear and unobstructed view of the finish line for the Finish Judges. It may be necessary to negotiate with Timekeepers and media to achieve this. The Chief Finish Judge also needs to instruct the Finish Judges to record all the places they can and leave gaps where places have been missed.

The Chief Finish Judge should work cooperatively with the Clerk of the Course and Recorder to note any withdrawals from the race to ensure a correct competitor count is maintained so that the number of competitors exiting the water matches the number that started the race.

The Chief Finish Judge receives the signed finish order sheets from the Finish Judges and uses this information to establish the determined order of finish, which is passed to the Recorder when completed. Some assessment may be required where the Finish Judges have not been able to establish the finish order of all of the competitors. It is necessary not just to look at the number of Finish Judges that have placed competitor X in a certain ranking, but also the number of times competitor X is placed ahead of competitor Y.

The Chief Finish Judge will brief the Race Judges on their assignments. The Chief Referee and/or Chief Finish Judge's instructions will cover, but not be limited to the following:

- Rules and their application.
- Course.
- Safety.
- Protocol.
- Special instructions.

3.7 FINISH JUDGES

Finish Judges (two) shall:

- 3.7.1 be positioned in line with the finish where they shall have at all times a clear view of the finish.
- 3.7.2 record after each finish the placing of the competitors according to the assignment given.

Note: *Finish Judges shall not act as Timekeepers in the same event.*

Where the course is a circuit and the finish area also constitutes a turn on the course, Finish Judges may act as Turn Judges, providing that doing so will not interfere with their responsibilities to judge the finish of the race. Should these responsibilities be likely to overlap, then separate officials should be appointed for each role.

Finish Judges must record their placings independently of one another. Where it is not possible to record all the competitors arriving in a pack, record those that can be identified, and leave a gap on the sheet to indicate missing placings, then place the next competitor/s that can be identified until all of the field have finished the race or left the water. When recording the competitor's order, the Finish Judge should not murmur or speak out aloud as this may distract or influence the other Finish Judges.

Once completed, Finish Judges sign their order of finish sheet and then hand it to the Chief Finish Judge to determine the result.

Where it is possible to consult with all the Finish Judges, the Chief Finish Judge may ask for partial results from time to time so that the determination of placings can commence in the gaps between finishers while the race is still in progress, to allow the overall result to be produced quicker at the end of the race.

The Chief Finish Judge and Finish Judges shall observe to ensure competitors touch the Vertical Wall at the finish (at venues where this is used at the finish point of the race) as required in **Part Three, Article 6.4**. Any infractions should be reported to the Chief Referee by the Chief Finish Judge.

A draft Finish Judge's summary sheet is included in the race documentation at the back of this manual.

3.8 RACE JUDGE

Each Race Judge shall:

- 3.8.1 be positioned in an escort safety craft (where applicable), assigned by random draw prior to the start, so as to be able to observe, at all times, his appointed competitor.
- 3.8.2 ensure at all times that the Rules of competition are complied with, violations being recorded in writing and reported to the Chief Referee at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.8.3 have the power to order a competitor from the water upon expiry of any time limit so ordered by the Chief Referee.
- 3.8.4 ensure that his appointed competitor does not take unfair advantage or commit unsporting impediment on another competitor and if the situation requires, instruct a competitor to maintain clearance from any other competitor.

Race judges observe the competitor/s and coaches/feeders they are assigned to ensure the rules are followed. For races longer than 10 km, the Race Judges will usually be assigned to the escort boat of each competitor.

The Race Judges will be assigned to an escort craft by draw immediately prior to the launching of the craft. Once assigned, the Race Judge shall immediately load and board the designated craft. No contact with the competitor or competitor's representative shall take place prior to boarding.

The Race Judge shall refrain from offering advice on the best routes to follow but shall ensure (except on grounds of safety) that the crew follow such directions as the competitor's representative may give.

The Race Judge shall keep a log on all matters pertaining to the swim. This log shall include violations of rules, time/distance information, and may also include stroke rate, times of feeding and any other incidents. This information shall be kept in a clear manner to enable inspection by a Medical Officer should the ability of the competitor to continue be in any doubt.

As the Race Judge could be in a small boat for many hours it is important that a cordial relationship with the competitor's representative and boat crew is established and maintained and that the competitors are given every opportunity to swim the course to the best of their ability.

At all times from the start until the assigned competitor leaves the water, the Race Judge shall be in such a position as to maintain close observation of their assigned competitor. With the obvious problems that arise in being on a

small craft for this length of time, care should be taken to ensure the Race Judge is fully prepared for personal comfort and sustenance.

Infringement **Part Three, Article 5.3.1:** note that this rule applies to the competitors' coach/feeder and escort craft as if applying to the competitor directly. Race Judges therefore need to observe the competitor and their coach/feeder to ensure no unfair advantage is taken nor any intentional support given to the competitor during the race (medical or safety intervention excluded – **Part Three, Article 5.7.1**).

Should it be necessary to intervene to ensure the rules are followed, the matter should be written down, along with the time, and the outcome and then inform the Chief Finish Judge or Chief Referee at the earliest possible opportunity.

Race Judges shall, at all times, bear in mind that they are the Chief Referee's representative, their primary role being to uphold the rules of the competition and to ensure that the competitor and competitor's representative are competing within the spirit of the sport.

3.9 TURN JUDGES

Turn Judges shall:

- 3.9.1 be positioned so as to ensure all competitors execute the alterations in course as indicated in the competition information documents and as given at the pre-race briefing.
- 3.9.2 record any infringement of the turn procedures on the record sheets provided, then immediately communicate the infringement to the Chief Referee.
- 3.9.3 promptly upon completion of the event deliver the signed record sheet to the Recorder.

Turn Judges must be appointed in sufficient quantity such that each change in the course can be judged by close observation to ensure all competitors round the turn buoy in accordance with the course plan and pre-race briefing.

Turn Judges need to closely observe that the competitors execute each change in the course and do so in accordance with the instructions they have been given. This means observing to ensure the competitors swim around the turn buoys in the correct direction and without impeding or otherwise interfering with other competitors in the race. A record should be kept of the competitors' numbers (or if this is too difficult, at minimum a count of the competitors) as they round the turn buoy. If there has been an infraction observed, it should be noted including the competitor's number and the time and reported immediately to the Chief Referee.

Many Turn Judges will be in watercraft unless the turning point is very close to the coast or a fixed platform is provided. Care should be taken to ensure the craft is positioned carefully so that all of the competitors can be seen rounding the mark, taking consideration of wind, tide, current and other factors to stay close to, but clear of the swimming line of the competitors.

3.10 FEEDING PLATFORM JUDGE

Each Feeding Platform Judge shall:

- 3.10.1 shall be responsible for the management of the activity and the competitors authorised representatives present on the platform, in accordance with World Aquatics rules.



For races of 10 km or less, or where the race is run over a circuit course such that individual escort boats are not appropriate, the Feeding Platform Judges will be located on the feeding platform/s to supervise the activities on the platform/s and the feeding process.

Access to the platform should be limited only to approved coaches/feeders allocated to that platform (by wristband or other access device) and any other approved persons. It is useful for the Feeding Platform Judge/s to conduct the registration of the nominated feeders and check the feeding poles comply with regulations and safety requirements, and issue access control devices for the platform. To ensure ready access to the coaches/feeders conducting the feeding, access by any other people to the platform should be limited to those necessary to be there for safety or operational reasons. Media cameras may be permitted in limited numbers only where they have been approved in advance and do not interfere with the operation of the platform.

Management of the platform during the event should maintain fair play behaviour to ensure all feeders have adequate opportunity to prepare and to feed their competitors without interference.

Note that infringement **Part Three, Article 5.3.1** applies to the competitors' coach/feeder and escort craft as if applying to the competitor directly. Feeding Platform Judges therefore need to observe the competitor and their coach/feeder to ensure no unfair advantage is taken nor any intentional support given to the competitor during the race (medical or safety intervention excluded – **Part Three, Article 5.7.1**).

Should it be necessary to intervene to ensure the rules are followed, the matter should be written down, along with the time, and the outcome and then inform the Chief Referee at the earliest possible opportunity.

3.11 RELAY JUDGE

Each Relay Judge shall:

- 3.11.1 The Relay Judge/s shall manage the activity on the Relay platform or change-over zone to ensure all changeovers occur in accordance with the rules whereby the arriving competitor completes their lap before the departure of the next competitor.



The Relay Judges are required to report violations personally observed (such as unsporting conduct between competitors, failure to touch, starting before the preceding competitor finishes, a competitor swimming twice in the same race) to the Chief Referee.

The Relay Judges are watching for the arrival of the lap finishing competitor, and their finish, and the start of the next departing competitor. They are also managing the Relay Platform area, and that only authorized persons are present in this area.

3.12 SAFETY OFFICER

The Safety Officer shall:

- 3.12.1** be responsible to the Chief Referee for all aspects of safety related to the conduct of the competition.
- 3.12.2** check that the entire course, with special regard to the start and finish areas is safe, suitable, and free of any obstruction.
- 3.12.3** be responsible for ensuring that sufficient powered safety craft are available during the competition so as to provide full safety backup to the escort safety craft.
- 3.12.4** provide prior to the competitions to all competitors a tide/current chart clearly indicating the time of tide changes on the course and showing the effect of tides or current on a competitor's progress along the course.
- 3.12.5** in conjunction with the Medical Officer advise the Chief Referee if, in their opinion, conditions are unsuitable for staging the competition and make recommendations for the modification of the course or the manner in which the competition is conducted.
- 3.12.6** monitor temperature conditions periodically during the race.

Risk management and event safety were always important requirements, but today there is a higher focus and increased legal obligation in many countries. The Safety Officer is probably the most important appointment within the Key Officials group. Ideally the Safety Officer should be a qualified public safety official such as a senior lifeguard, coast guard or fire service officer who is familiar with the management of risk around the conduct of an open water event. The person appointed to the role of Safety Officer should have the following attributes:

- Specialist skills in recognizing risks and possible dangers.
- Can put in place procedures to isolate, eliminate, or minimise the identified risks.
- Coordinate the combined expertise of others into a single cohesive unit to deliver a comprehensive safety plan.
- Good attitude and approach, and appropriate judgment in the implementation of the safety plan.

The Safety Officer will need to get involved in the organisation of the event at a very early stage and is generally appointed by the Organising Committee. They will have input into the consideration of the course and assessment of its suitability for use for the competition.

In addition to the Rules, please note that the Safety Officer:

- Coordinates with the Course Officer on all aspects of the course. Checks the tidal conditions/rates of water flow and be satisfied that the course is safe for the conduct of the Championship.
- Coordinates medical concerns and approaches to remedy the problems with the Medical Officer.
- Confirms that there are no other factors (such as debris, sea snake, shark, crocodile, or jellyfish) which would render the venue undesirable.
- Checks with the Course Officer that suitable warnings of the competition have been passed to all other craft using, or likely to use, any portion of the course.
- Briefs competitors, coaches/feeders, Race Judges, and boat crews on all or any potential safety hazards and the action to be taken should any happen.
- Checks, prior to the start evacuation procedures, and sites of Medical Teams.
- 15 minutes prior to the start confirms to the Chief Referee that, in their opinion, all safety requirements have been met.
- Ensures the safety and competitors' escort craft as being suitable for the purpose intended. Depending upon conditions appertaining to a particular course, the type of boat used will vary. In general terms the following criteria should apply.

- The boat should be of sufficient size to be able to contain the crew, the Race Judge and a competitor's representative.
- During any long distance race the competitor will need to receive refreshment at regular intervals. Therefore, it is essential that the competitor's representative can get close enough to transfer the required refreshment without impairment or delay to the competitor.
- If propulsion of the escort boat is achieved by human effort, it must be remembered that the competitors will be travelling at up to 4 km/h and if there would be a head wind during the championships, staying with the competitor could be very difficult.
- When an escort boat with mechanical propulsion is used, the following points should be considered:
 - Exhaust fumes. Vertical or inboard exhausts present little problem; however, waterline exhausts can cause severe problems for the competitor.
 - At surface speeds of 3 knots or less a standard inboard, or outboard, engine will be liable to 'oiling up' and require periods of high revolution bursts to keep the engine clean. These should always be conducted with the engine in neutral.
 - When a large engine is used and there is a problem with staying alongside a competitor 'Drogues' can be used. One or two buckets attached to secure lines can be streamed behind the boat to give additional drag. Care must be exercised that the lines cannot become tangled in the propellers or cause interference to any other competitor or their escort safety craft.
- Toilet arrangements: consideration should be given to the personal requirements of those persons who may be in the boat for up to eight or nine hours.
- Measures and records the water temperature at regular intervals throughout the race in accordance with the Safety Regulations.

They will need to survey the course with the Course Officer and identify the possible hazards that may be encountered on the proposed course.

High tide and low tide should be posted in the race information as referral for the competitors.

- High Tide: The time when the sea or a river reaches its highest level and comes furthest up the beach.
- Low Tide: The time when the sea has reached its lowest level.

The Safety Officer must ensure all relevant public authorities are aware of the competition and have given their approval as required.

The initial step in safety management is to conduct a risk assessment of the venue(s) which has been approved by the relevant authorities. Without the adaptation of the strategy to the specific conditions of the location with respect to potential hazards and other factors influencing the safety of competitors, safety will not be effectively managed. The aim is to eliminate the risk or reduce the risk(s) to a minimum. The Safety Officer shall, in conjunction with other relevant officers and the Local Organizing Committee, develop a comprehensive safety and risk management plan to address the safety aspects of the competition. Once agreed such plans shall be widely circulated to those functions necessary to ensure effective implementation.

The Safety Officer is also responsible for the appointment and supervision of suitably qualified additional safety staff as are deemed necessary to implement and manage the Risk Management and Safety plans. Once the course is finalised, numbers of safety personnel, and escort boats need to be identified and positioned. The Safety Officer must recruit sufficient safety personnel and escorts crews as soon as possible, or work with the organising committee on this. Sufficient safety craft should be identified to ensure that there are designated powered craft to:

- Adequately provide close support to cover the whole field for the full duration of the race, especially for races that do not have escort boats with each competitor.

- Provide first response medical support, equipped with appropriate medical first aid equipment to assist, treat and ferry any competitors or others suffering distress on the course to more comprehensive medical support onshore. In the case a rescue boat is used it should be manned with at least two people, a driver, and a lifeguard. If jet skis are used for safety, then they should be equipped with rescue equipment and a rescue board behind the jet-ski. Lifeguards should wear life jackets. In the case a jet ski is used it should be manned with one driver and one lifeguard; and
- Additional craft to cover for any boats that may breakdown or be otherwise incapacitated.

Support craft such as kayaks and canoes may be used to provide supplementary close support safety cover but cannot be used to substitute for appropriate powered craft. The Safety Officer must inspect the safety craft to ensure they are suitable for the purpose intended. Prop guards should be fitted to the propellers of all motorised safety craft. Inflatables offer high manoeuvrability and can get close to the field with minimal wash for officials and competitors and are easier for the retrieval of competitors from the water but can have difficulty keeping on track in windy weather and be rowed if the motor breaks down.

Where safety craft are positioned in stationary locations along/around a course, they should maintain their position relative to the course, but not be anchored – so that they are immediately able to move to support anyone in distress. AQUA Safety Regulations (See Appendix) prefer close support craft to follow the competitors as they move around the course supported by motorised safety craft, rather than to have stationary craft monitoring a 'zone' of the course as this method does not make best use of the safety craft when competitors are located only on a particular part of the course.

The Safety Officer is responsible for writing the Safety Plan: a document outlining the safety procedures that will apply for the competition and can be used as a reference document by all relevant parties and teams/coaches in their planning and conduct of the competition.

It is important to look after and identify safety personnel, who will then be willing to assist in the following years or for future events. This includes feeding them, donations to their clubs, etc.

Ensure safety personnel are of a calibre fit to carry out the function required. Brief them on their exact duties and responsibilities as far in advance of the event as possible and ensure each person knows their exact location and responsibility. This can be done with maps or by a site visit. Each safety official should be given detailed race information, water data, details of emergency procedures, radio and contact numbers and the names of the Safety Officer (including call sign) and Race Judges. In longer events, refreshments should be supplied and/or relief safety personnel arranged.

It is vitally important that the organiser has made provision for non-attendance of support personnel, particularly safety crews. A list of role priorities should be produced, and personnel re-assigned from lower priority points as required. Under no circumstances should personnel be asked to endanger themselves.

Where the race is reliant upon a separate organisation providing safety crews it is essential that they are briefed on your safety procedures and that the compatibility of the two disparate procedures is assessed and addressed.

Primary and secondary communications should be identified and put in place to provide communications for race coordination and safety communication. Separate radio channels should be considered for these two functions to keep race traffic separate from that for safety.

All support personnel should be issued with safety equipment and clothing including weather protection and life jackets.

3.13 MEDICAL OFFICER

The Medical Officer shall:

3.13.1 be responsible to the Chief Referee for all medical aspects related to the competition and competitors.

3.13.2 inform the local medical facilities of the nature of the competition and ensure that any casualties can be evacuated to medical facilities at the earliest opportunity.

- 3.13.3** in conjunction with the Safety Officer, advise the Chief Referee if, in their opinion, conditions are unsuitable for staging the competition and make recommendations for the modification of the course or the manner in which the competition is conducted.

In addition to the Rules:

The Medical Officer must be suitably qualified for the role and is responsible to the Organising Committee for the provision of adequate medical / safety cover to ensure the well-being of all competitors and provide such facilities as are required under the rules and recommendations of AQUA. During the actual event the Medical Officer's primary responsibility is to the Chief Referee and will also act in conjunction with and liaise with the Safety Officer.

The Medical Officer's duties shall include:

- Checking that the water quality for the designated course is safe and suitable for staging the event.
- To compile such data on the status of the competitors as may be requested by the AQUA Sports Medicine Committee.
- Provide for officials, boat crews and competitors' representatives an explanation of the race medical plan. This plan should include competitor recovery/casualty evacuation procedures.
- Provide for Medical, First Aid and Paramedic Teams a detailed explanation of the medical plan together with relevant procedures required for its activation.
- Ensure that all competitors, at the time of finishing or in the case of withdrawal, at the point of landing are not requiring further medical supervision.
- Providing advice and assistance regarding suitable intake of refreshment or sustenance to aid recovery from the event.
- Submitting a detailed report on all medical aspects of the event together with any recommendations for the planning and execution of medical plans in future events.

The Medical Officer should visually check the water quality certificate and in conjunction with the Safety Officer confirm to the Chief Referee that the conditions are acceptable for the conduct of the competition, including checking factors such as aquatic fauna (e.g. sea snakes, sharks, crocodiles, jellyfish), currents, and temperature or other conditions that may make conditions hazardous.

The Medical Officer is responsible for oversight of all the medical aspects of the competition. In addition to the Rules, By-laws, and Regulations for AQUA events the Medical Officer also needs to specify medical responsibilities that need to be observed in the organisation of Open Water Swimming events.

The venue(s) shall have adequate and fully equipped first-aid treatment facilities for competitors, officials, and the public. These facilities together with the number and qualifications of assistants who will administer treatment shall be approved by the local authorities concerned. Ambulance(s) shall be stationed on site during the whole of the competition.

MEDICAL SUPPORT

In each aquatics sport, guidelines must be established regarding the necessary medical support depending on the nature of the sports' activities and the level of competition.

These guidelines should address, but not be limited to, the following points:

- the medical coverage of training and competition venues and how this is organised.
- the necessary resources (supplies, premises, vehicles, etc.).
- the procedures in case of emergencies.
- the system of communication between the medical support services, the organisers, and the competent health authorities.

In the case of a serious incident occurring during training or competition, there should be procedures to provide the necessary support to those injured, by evacuating them to the competent medical services when needed. The athletes, coaches and persons associated with the sports activity should be informed of those procedures and receive the necessary training for their implementation.

To reinforce safety in the practice of sports, a mechanism should exist to allow for data collection with regard to injuries sustained during training and/or competition. When identifiable, such data should be collected with the

consent of those concerned and be treated confidentially and in accordance with the recognised ethical principles of research.

The Medical Officer needs to develop a full Medical Action Plan for the competition detailing:

- First aid on site (both on the water and on the shore).
- The level of equipment to be available on site:
 - at the venue.
 - at/on the Field of Play.
- Doctor/s on-call or medical facilities available for use by Teams and Officials.
- Hospitals that competitors/officials/team staff will be sent to for initial treatments and/or more serious care.
- Stable transport from the water to land and from land to more advanced medical facilities and hospitals when deemed necessary. The transport vehicles must allow for on-going treatment or resuscitation.
- Transport plan for situations where referral to hospital is required.
- Methodology and equipment for medical coordination and communication.
- Strategy, method, and responsibility of actions in case of emergency; and
- Coordination contacts with safety and other emergency services.

The detailed Medical Action Plan for any given event will be unique when the vast range of variables are taken into consideration, especially the variations in temperatures and climatic conditions. It needs to dovetail with the safety plan covering safety at the venue and on the course, with the medical plan identifying actions and procedures to be implemented once competitors, officials, coaches, or others are evacuated to the shore.

The Medical Action Plan needs to be widely distributed so that all involved with the event know the necessary information as to what treatment is available where and should someone be taken to hospital or other medical treatment facility, and which one.

Ambulance(s) stationed on site must be comprehensively equipped and staffed with suitably qualified Paramedic personnel to attend to any medical issues experienced on site, including advanced cardiac resuscitation.

Should the race conditions require it, the Medical Officer should provide the final physical examination of the competitors on the day of the event and advise the Chief Referee and the organisers of any, that in the opinion of the Medical Officer, are medically unfit to participate in the competition.

The Medical Officer should ensure the availability of sufficient suitably qualified medical personnel and supervise their examination of the competitors as they leave the water, either through withdrawal or at the finish of the race in accordance with **Part Three, Articles 6.6 - 6.9**. Even when the water temperature and air conditions are good it is advisable to have additional resources at the swim exit. Hypothermia can occur in relatively warm water.

3.14 COURSE OFFICER

The Course Officer shall:

- 3.14.1 be responsible to the Management Committee for the correct survey of the course.
- 3.14.2 ensure the start and finish areas are correctly marked and all equipment has been correctly installed and, where applicable, is in working order.
- 3.14.3 ensure all course alteration points are correctly marked, and manned prior to the commencement of the competition.
- 3.14.4 with the Referee and Safety Officer inspect the course and markings prior to the commencement of competition.
- 3.14.5 ensure that Turn Judges are in position prior to the start of the competition and report this to the Chief Referee.

One of the most important factors is course planning, so the Course Officer is another Organising Committee appointee who needs to be involved right from the outset. There are a number of factors and guidelines that should be observed, and all need careful consideration for safety and suitability. These include:

- Climatic data – weather, water and air temperature, prevailing winds (historical for proposed period).
- Water quality data (historical for proposed period of the event).
- Anticipated tidal/current information.
- Ready access for medical evacuation around/along the course.
- Access to appropriate facilities for officials and race organisers to perform their official functions, and also support facilities such as bathrooms.
- Appropriate permissions to use the proposed course.
- Information on the bed of the watercourse (hazards, fastening for buoys).

It is important that the course is determined following local advice and assessment of historical data and measured well in advance. Water quality and current information should be sought from relevant authorities for the relevant time of year early in the planning to assess the suitability of a particular course for an open water swimming event. This is to ensure that changes to the course can be made should weather or sea/water conditions deteriorate. Consideration should be given to planning an alternative course that can be put into effect with the minimum of delay.

The course should be carefully chosen, as the primary concern for all open water swimming events must be the safety of those participating.

The venue may be under the control of one or more local authorities and getting the necessary permissions may take some time, so getting these people on-side and supportive of the event is an essential early planning activity. Commercial users of any venue will always have primary access, so it is important to gain their agreement and cooperation.

For out of water dive starts from a waterfront bulkhead, jetty, or floating platform, ensure that the water depth has been surveyed and that the depth complies with the minimum required (1.4m) being mindful tidal changes maybe a factor. A physical check of the starting area should be made well in advance of the competition to ensure that there are no unseen shallow water obstructions in the water.

Once agreed, a course plan needs to be prepared detailing:

- The Start and Finish area/s and distance to shore.
- The distance between turning buoys and feeding points where present.
- Medical evacuation points on the course.
- Race Control office.
- Marshalling area.

This document is key, as it will form the basis for planning for many aspects of the competition, including athlete preparation, safety and risk management planning, and the Medical Action Plan.

Some additional points:

- Prior to the first briefing meeting ensure that all aspects of the course conform to the initial safety clearance given at time of application.
- Ensure prior to the first briefing that no obstructions exist on the course other than those already identified.
- Confer with, and keep fully briefed, the Safety Officer and the Chief Referee.
- At the briefing meeting ensure that large scale maps of the course, clearly showing start, finish and all turns, are available for competitors' representatives, race judges, all officials and the media.
- Confirm with all Turn Judges and allocate transport to their positions.
- Check that sufficient transport is available to ensure that Turn Judges will be on station in time to carry out their duties and that sufficient arrangements have been made to ensure their collection after the last competitor has passed their post.

The Course Officer probably needs to be the first person at the course on the day of the competition. Unless it's been possible to set-up the course the day before, there is a lot to be done before the competitors and officials

arrive on the course and just 90 minutes before the start will probably be insufficient time for all that has to be done. Even where things have been set-up the day before it is essential to re-check everything to make sure nothing has changed or disappeared overnight. Just when you least expect it something will undoubtedly not go to plan and require additional time to correct.

Check that the start and finish areas are correctly set-up and marked properly, that equipment is installed and in proper working order.

Ensure that course alterations are all correctly positioned and marked (Buoys, Markers, or other moored craft that are used to define turning points or alterations in the course). GPS is a good tool to quickly check the positioning if you have this available.

In company with the Referee and the Safety Officer inspect the course and markings prior to the start of the event.

Check the Turn Judges are in their correct positions prior to the start of the race and confirm this to the Chief Referee. This is particularly important, as it is the Course Officer's responsibility to ensure they are all in place, so that they can properly perform their duties.

The Course Officer will probably be the last person off the water following the conclusion of the competition, as everything that has been put out for the race needs to be collected back again and the course returned to its original condition. Check with the Chief Referee before any equipment is removed from the course – there is nothing more embarrassing than finding that part of the course has already been removed and there are still competitors on the course wanting to swim around the buoys that have been lifted!

3.15 CLERK OF THE COURSE

The Clerk of the Course shall:

- 3.15.1 assemble and prepare competitors prior to each event and ensure proper reception facilities at the finish are available for all competitors.
- 3.15.2 ensure each competitor is identified correctly with their race number and that all swimmers have trimmed fingernails and toenails and are not wearing any jewellery, including watches.
- 3.15.3 be certain all competitors are present, in the assembly area, at the required time prior to the start.
- 3.15.4 keep competitors and officials informed of the time remaining before the start at suitable intervals until the last five minutes, during which one-minute warnings shall be given.
- 3.15.5 be responsible for ensuring that all clothing and equipment left in the start area is transported to the finish area and kept in safekeeping.
- 3.15.6 ensure that all competitors leaving the water at the finish have the basic equipment required for their well-being should their own attendants not be present at that time.
- 3.15.7 The Clerk of the Course shall notify the Chief Referee and Recorder of any withdrawals and DNF's: Did-Not-Finish.

The Clerk of the Course is responsible for the registration, numbering, and management of the competitors prior to the start of the race, for ensuring their clothing and equipment is looked after, keeping a count of the number of competitors in the water during the race, and that they are looked after at the end of the race until their coaches/feeders arrive to attend to them.

Depending on the number of competitors, it will probably be necessary to appoint more than one Clerk of Course in order to ensure all pre-race functions are addressed. Timekeepers and Finish Judges may be able to help with the pre-race activities to prepare the competitors for the competition. In the pre-race area, the Clerk/s of Course must:

- Check-in the competitors (and their coaches/handlers where required).
- Check the swimsuit to be worn is on the AQUA 'Approved' list and more than one is not being worn or if wetsuits are being used, comply with the AQUA wetsuit guidelines.
- Check/issue caps in accordance with the criteria for the race.

- Check all swimwear (caps, suits, and goggles) comply with AQUA Advertising guidelines if required. Note it's helpful to have this information from AQUA rules available for reference with you as Clerk of the Course at the venue.
- Check that any wearables are on the World Aquatics 'Approved List'.
- Check that the competitor's fingers and toenails are trimmed, and all jewellery has been removed (including in the mouth, navel, or other body piercing jewellery).
- Number the competitors on both shoulders, upper arms, and the backs of hands. For events where tattoos are being used it would be common for officials to not be applying the tattoos, but it is still advisable to offer guidance to who is applying them, so they are applied correctly. Where officials are offering guidance, protective gloves should be worn. These should be single use and disposed of after use.
- It is useful for the Feeding Platform Judge/s to conduct the registration of the nominated feeders and check the feeding poles comply with regulations (**Part Three, Article 5.16**) and safety requirements, and issue access control devices for the platform.
- Issue transponders for races where these are being used and receive same back again after the finish.
- Give regular advice of the time remaining to the start of the race.

Clerks of Course need to be onsite well in advance of the start of registration so that they are well prepared for the competitors' arrival and can perform their duties quickly and efficiently before the race.

Copies of the start list of all competitors are required, especially where race numbers have been pre-allocated so that these can be used as reference documents for numbering and transponder allocation.

From the beginning of the registration process, the Clerk of the Course and Announcer must keep the competitors, coaches, and officials informed of the time remaining to the start. These announcements should be made at suitable intervals to meet the timelines leading up to the start (close of registration/numbering, final pre-race briefing, introduction, the Start).

During the last five minutes prior to the start announcements should be made at one-minute intervals. Coordinate with the Announcer and Chief Referee to agree the correct time and establish with the Announcer the time intervals to be announced prior to the start and monitor that these are made at the correct time. Also confirm with the Chief Referee the time and location of the pre-race briefing.

Set-up of the registration area is important to ensure a good flow of competitors through the check-in and numbering process, so good layout of this area is important. Setting up the space with a number of 'stations' each checking one of the aspects above is a good way of quickly and efficiently checking the competitors and keeping the flow moving as they progress through the process.

Entry to the registration/marshalling area should be restricted solely to those personnel required to be there, to avoid overcrowding and to allow the competitors to prepare for the race without disturbance.

In addition to wide nib pens or stamps for numbering, make sure there are baby wipes or similar to remove any errors that may be made, and also white pens to number any competitors with darker skin. It is a good idea to bring a manicure set or nail scissors/clippers and file so that any nails may be trimmed and smoothed if required. Sterilising solution is also a good idea for cleaning/sanitizing these tools between use. For Wetsuit races, pastel crayons are best for numbering the competitors' wetsuits.

Numbers are applied to the upper arms, shoulder blades, and hands. The numbers should be in accordance with **Part Three, Article 9.1** so that any race personnel can easily read them. Legible numbers are very important as they are the means of identifying each competitor during the race.

As part of the duties & responsibilities of the Clerk of the Course in this manual the following AQUA rules have been included here:

- PART THREE, ARTICLE 9.1 NUMBERING OF COMPETITORS.
- PART ONE, ARTICLE 8.6 AQUA OPEN WATER SWIMMING CAPS.
- PART ONE, ARTICLE 7.1 SWIMWEAR FOR ALL AQUATICS SPORTS.
- PART THREE, ARTICLE 7 SWIMWEAR & TECHNOLOGY;

PART THREE, ARTICLE 9.1 NUMBERING OF COMPETITORS

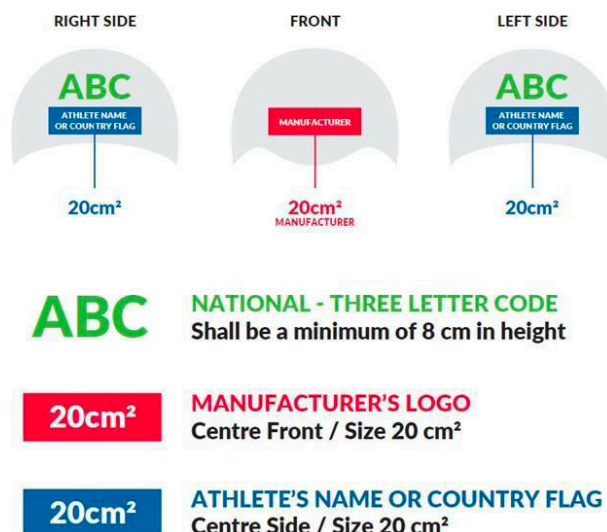
The numbering of competitors is to appear on the arms, upper backs and hands of competitors. On the arms the numbers shall be arranged vertically. On the upper backs and hands, the numbering is horizontally. Where the numbering of the arms and backs is made with an ink template: 100 mm high x 60 mm wide. The numbering of the hands of competitors is allowed by marking pens. For competitors with darker skin a white marker pen will be required.



PART ONE, ARTICLE 8.6 OPEN WATER SWIMMING CAPS

In all Open Water events it is mandatory for the head or cap to display on each side the "national-three letter code" and may display the competitor's national flag or the competitor's name. The country code shall be a minimum of 8cm in height. Caps meeting the specifications of Part One, Article 8.5 are not acceptable except for one (1) manufacturer's logo of a maximum size of 20cm² on the front.





As competitors are numbered, a check of their swimsuit should be made to ensure it is on the approved list published by AQUA as per **Part One, Article 7.4**. It is a good idea to have the current [AQUA Approved List](#) (download from the AQUA website) available for reference in the registration area, so that any doubt can be quickly addressed through reference to the official list.

PART ONE, ARTICLE 7.1 SWIMWEAR FOR ALL AQUATICS SPORTS

Swimwear to be used in World Aquatics Competitions, World Aquatics Sanctioned Competitions, qualifying for World Aquatics Competitions or Olympic Games shall meet the requirements provided in this section. The Rules in this Section are also complemented by Swimwear Rules per Aquatic Sports (Part One, Articles 3 - 9) and Technical & Approval Implementing Rules for Swimwear (Part One, Article 7.5).

The Athlete's safety and health are to be taken into consideration and all matters regarding Swimwear shall be treated with due regard to fair play and a sound development of the Sports.

Athletes' Swimwear shall be in good moral taste and suitable for the individual Aquatics sports, and not to carry any symbol which may be considered offensive.

These rules do not regulate directly issues on markings (team, emblems, manufacturer markings, sponsor markings), which are described under Part One, Article 8. However, they address markings (including also technical markings) in connection with their potential relevance from the point of view of the approval criteria. (Notable: thickness and permeability)

Further related information is found extensively in **Part Three, Articles 7 - 8**: of the AQUA Competition Regulations, and is well worth being familiar for a variety of roles for technical officials for Open Water Swimming.

PART THREE, ARTICLE 7 SWIMWEAR & TECHNOLOGY

- 7.1** For open water swimming competitions with water temperature from 18°C and above, swimsuits (men & women) shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the ankle. Subject to these specific shape specifications, swimsuits for open water swimming competitions shall further comply with all other requirements applicable to swimsuits for swimming pool competition.
- 7.2** For open water swimming competitions in water with temperature below 18°C, the use of wetsuits is compulsory. Wetsuits are not permitted in open water swimming competitions in water with temperature 18°C and above.

7.3 Wetsuits

Wetsuits (for both men and women) shall completely cover torso, back, shoulders and knees. They shall not extend beyond the neck, wrists and ankles.

7.4 Team Event

All competitors from the same team must wear the same colour caps which shall also comply with the Competition Regulations, Part One, Article 8.6.

7.5 Technology

Technology such as drones, GPS tracking, bio-medical sensors or devices that record blood pressure, body temperature, stroke rate, breathing rate etc. via the transponder are permitted when approved by World Aquatics.

The technology may transmit such information but not act as a receiver giving information and advantage to the competitor such as "smart goggles", hearing devices, and the like.

Once all competitors have registered and been numbered, they may be 'greased' for the race with sunscreen, lanolin etc before presentation prior to the race. The Chief Referee and Recorder should be informed at this time of any competitors who have failed to register so that a final count of competitors competing in the race can be distributed to all officials.

The Recorder handles all withdrawals, so anyone wishing to withdraw should be directed to the Recorder. The Clerk of Course and Recorder must work closely together to ensure a correct count of swimmers is maintained and advised to all officials.

The final pre-race briefing is usually held in the registration/marshalling area.

The Clerk/s of Course are also responsible for ensuring that all/any clothing and competitors' equipment left in the pre-race area is kept secure and taken to the finish to be available for competitors after they have exited the water. A bag with the competitor's number on the outside is a quick and efficient way of achieving this. Make sure someone is always in the area with the competitors' gear if it is not a secure space.

The Clerk/s of Course are responsible for the competitor's well-being at the finish, and this is also covered in part under the duties of the Medical Officer. Make sure there are chairs available for the competitors to rest on as they exit the water, where they can be examined by the medial support staff, and some refreshments, including sealed water or electrolyte drinks available, both as they exit the water and in the recovery area. The recovery area should be treated as a closed area, with access only to competitors, coaches, and necessary officials. In many respects it is similar to the changing room - It is not a place for family members, friends, and media.

3.16 THE RECORDER

3.16.1 The Recorder shall record withdrawals from the competition, enter results on official forms, and maintain record for team awards as appropriate.

The recorder is an integral part of the officiating team. The Recorder works with the Chief Referee and the Organising Committee before the event to establish:

- The method of recording/scoring to be used (it could be electronic or hard copy depending on the facilities available).
- The anticipated number of competitors (both male and female).
- The method of draw (manual or electronic) to be used for race numbers and/or start position; and
- The software that will be used and make contact with the individual scheduled to operate it. The most popular vendors of meet management programs incorporate Open Water swimming scoring functionality.

It is strongly recommended that a unique sequential competitor number is recorded against each competitor's name. This should be done in conjunction with the Clerk of the Course when each competitor personally registers for their race, if the issue of competitor numbers has not been done prior to registration.

In the case of both pre-entry and race-day entry – the Organising Committee should arrange to have a list of numbers starting with the next competitor number from the pre-entries, i.e. pre-entry has 186 competitors entered, then the number list should start from 187 for the race-day entries. It is strongly recommended however, that race-day entries are not accepted unless appropriate systems have been put in place to handle this, and allowance made for sufficient safety craft.

If the number of competitors is fairly small (less than 100) and the meet is pre-entered, consider keeping the number assignments for each gender to a block of numbers. Example 45 women and 40 men entered. Assign women numbers 1-45 – assign men numbers 50-89. This grouping will help Referees and Finish Judges during the meet. It may also help when breaking out the scoring after the event.

In conjunction with the Clerk of the Course issue to and record a *unique sequential number* for each competitor as they register. Registering is the same as reporting to the Marshalling Area at a "Pool" Meet and having your presence noted in preparation for your race.

The importance of *unique sequential numbering* cannot be over stressed. Prior to the start of the race the Chief Referee will ask for the exact number of competitors who have registered. With this information the Recorder will inform the Referees, Judges, competitor support and medical personnel. If two competitors are issued with the same number for races occurring at the same time, during the race and at the finish, the Recorder will have no way of determining whose times have been recorded. If someone fails to complete the race and leaves the venue *without reporting to the Recorder / Clerk of Course* there is no way of knowing until someone asks, "Have you seen so and so?". This type of situation can lead to an unnecessary search and rescue situation to find the missing competitor. *Be assured this is not a pleasant task.* Nor are the ramifications of knowing that there may be a "lost swimmer".

EXTREME CARE MUST BE EXERCISED.

It is also strongly recommended that concurrent sets of identical numbers never be used for men and women even if they are separately swum. The same numbers being used for both groups will cause confusion for all Officials at some stage of the race.

- *Only the Recorder issues and records the competitor numbers.*
- The numbers are unique and sequential unless otherwise dictated.
- No official should leave the venue with recording material, nor should they leave without the permission of a functional Chief, or the Chief Referee.

There have been occasions when protests have been made and the Jury of Appeal has sought to investigate the matter only to find that the necessary officials have already left, in some cases taking their paperwork with them.

The only time when the number of competitors registered does not equal the number in the water for the start is when someone withdraws after registration, but prior to the start. If this occurs, then all relevant personnel must be informed. These include the Chief Referee and Referees, Judges, Clerk/s of the Course, and the Recorder. All competitors must be accounted for!

The competitor numbers are recorded on the competitor's entry card. From the entry cards the Master Control/Results Sheets are prepared. While the Results Sheet is primarily for recording results (lap times, finish times and finish order). Its preparation is a secondary check that each competitor has been issued with a *unique sequential number*.

Withdrawals before the start are received by the Recorder who relays this information to the Chief Referee and Clerk of The Course to update the headcount of all competitors entering the water.

During the competition/race, any competitor exiting the water or field play due to disqualification, injury or voluntary withdrawal must be immediately reported to the Chief Referee, Recorder, Clerk of Course and Medical Support Personnel by the Referees and/or Safety Officer on the water.

It is important that at any time throughout the event that the Recorder and Clerk of Course are able to supply the Chief Referee with an update of exactly how many competitors are still in the water at any given time – even after some of the competitors may have retired or completed their event.

Where a stopwatch is used that has an inbuilt printer the first competitor number is recorded against the first time printed and then the last competitor number in the group. It is useful from time to time to record the competitor's number on the printout as a cross-check.

Depending on the configuration of the course, the Recorder receives intermediate lap times or turn buoy times (course positional times at a predetermined point i.e. halfway) at various times throughout the race.

As the competitors cross the start/finish line or round a predetermined point, the Timekeepers record each competitor's time by the split lap function if requested to do so by the Chief Timekeeper. Depending on the type of timing system used, the exact format of these sheets may vary. This may be a printout from a stopwatch with an inbuilt printer or a time sheet with elapsed times.

Finish Judges record the order of finish of the competitors by competitors' numbers.

The Chief Finish Judge's placement sheet and the Chief Timekeeper's time sheet with the determined times are forwarded to the Recorder who will merge the place finishes with the finish times and resolve any discrepancies.

After all lap times have been recorded on the Master Results Sheet, the places as determined by the times are checked against the Chief Finish Judges' finish places. Where the Finish Judges' places and the finish times agree the places are recorded in the Place Column remembering to separate the Men's and Women's events and Age Groups where the competition dictates. If there is a discrepancy between the Finish Judges' order of finish and the times recorded by the Timekeepers, the matter is referred to the Chief Referee for his/her determination.

Video replay can be extremely helpful in resolving discrepancies as described in **Part Three, Article 6.2**. Competitors that are allowed to finish the race but are out of the time limit specified in **Part Three, Article 5.17** shall be included in the results at the end of the field with no time or place and the designation "OTL" meaning "Over Time Limit".

Once the Chief Referee has determined the result the Recorder will complete the Place Column prior to the posting of Results. If team or age group scoring is indicated by the Meet Information, the Recorder is tasked to tabulate those results and points.

4. THE START

- 4.1 All Open Water competitions shall start with all competitors wearing an approved swim cap and standing on a fixed platform or in water depth sufficient for them to commence swimming on the start signal.
- 4.1.1 When starting from a fixed platform competitors shall be assigned a position on the platform, as determined by random draw.
- 4.1.2 For Olympic Games, World Aquatics Championships, and other World Aquatics competitions the start shall be from a fixed platform.
- 4.2 The Clerk of the Course shall keep competitors and officials informed of the time before start at suitable intervals and at one-minute intervals for the last five minutes.
- 4.3 When the number of entries dictate the start shall be segregated into Men's and Women's competitions.
- 4.4 The start line shall be clearly defined by either overhead apparatus or by removable equipment at water level.
- 4.5 The Chief Referee shall indicate by a flag held upright and short blasts on a whistle when the start is imminent and indicate that the competition is under Starter's orders by pointing the flag at the starter.
- 4.6 The Starter shall be positioned so as to be clearly visible to all competitors.
- 4.6.1 On the Starter's command "take your marks" all competitors shall take up a starting position immediately in line with the start line where a platform is not used, or with at least one foot at the front of the platform.
- 4.6.2 The Starter will give the starting signal when he/she considers all competitors are ready.

- 4.7 The start signal shall be both audible and visual.
- 4.8 If in the opinion of the Chief Referee an unfair advantage has been gained at the start the offending competitor will be given a yellow or red flag in accordance with Part Three, Article 5.3.
- 4.9 All escort safety craft shall be stationed prior to the start so as not to interfere with any competitor, and if picking up their competitor from behind shall navigate in such a way as not to manoeuvre through the field of competitors.
- 4.10 Although they may start together, in all other respects the men's and women's competitions shall be treated as separate events.



An open water swimming event may start with the competitors standing or treading water in a depth sufficient for them to start swimming on the start signal. Races may also start from a fixed platform – the competitors' positions are determined by random draw, and they start the race by a dive start.

All starts require the traditional Starter's command "Take Your Marks" once the Chief Referee has indicated the handover with his arm and flag outstretched.

Verify with the Chief Referee and Course Officer that the water depths meet the minimum requirements of 1.4m since the competitors will be directing their visual attention to entering the water safely. The starting lines can vary greatly depending on the race.

In water starts may be identified by imaginary lines between two points or actual rope lines (with or without floats) stretched between two buoys or boats in the water. The start line may also be defined by a line stretched over the water. If an actual line is placed in the water, it is recommended that the competitor's line up on the course side of the line so as to minimize the risks of entanglement after the start.

If the total number of competitors exceeds a safe number (which will be determined by the Chief Referee in consultation with the Safety Officer, Course Officer and Meet Director, the race may be started in waves (cohorts). In National Championship level competition, Men's and Women's races are started separately. The appropriate time interval between the men's start and women's start will depend on course design. A 5-10 minute stagger usually works well on a 2.5 km loop course.

5. THE RACE

- 5.1 All Open Water competitions shall be Freestyle events and competitors are required to complete the whole course, respecting all designated turn buoys and course boundaries.

- 5.2 Race Judges shall instruct any competitor who is, in their opinion, taking unfair advantage by pacing or slip streaming with the escort craft to move clear.
- 5.3 **DISQUALIFICATION PROCEDURE**
- 5.3.1 If in the Opinion of the Chief Referee or Referees, any competitor, or competitor's approved representative, or escort safety craft, takes advantage by committing any violation of the rules or by making intentional contact with any competitor, the following procedure shall apply:
- 5.3.1.1 **1st Infringement:** A yellow flag and a card bearing the competitor's number shall be raised to indicate and to inform the competitor that they are in violation of the Rules.
- 5.3.1.2 **2nd Infringement:** A red flag and a card bearing the competitor's number shall be raised by the Referee (Part Three, Article 3.1.6) to indicate and to inform the competitor that they are for the second time in violation of the Rules. The competitor shall be disqualified.
- 5.3.2 If in the opinion of a Referee, an action of a competitor or an escort safety craft, or a competitor's approved representative is deemed to be 'unsporting' the Referee shall disqualify the competitor concerned immediately. The competitor must leave the water immediately and be placed in an escort craft and take no further part in the race.
- 5.4 Escort safety craft shall manoeuvre so as not to obstruct or place them directly ahead of any competitor and not take unfair advantage by pacing or slip streaming.
- 5.5 Escort safety craft shall attempt to maintain a constant position so as to station the competitor at, or forward of, the mid-point of the escort safety craft.
- 5.6 Standing on the bottom during a race shall not disqualify a competitor, but they may not walk or jump.
- 5.7 With the exception of Part Three, Article 5.6 competitor shall not receive support from any fixed or floating object and shall not intentionally touch or be touched by their escort safety craft or crew therein.
- 5.7.1 Rendering assistance by an official medical officer to a competitor in apparent distress should always supersede official rules of disqualification through "intentional contact" with a competitor (Part Three, Article 5.3.1).
- 5.8 For races where escort boats are used, each escort safety craft shall contain: a Race Judge, a person of the competitor's choice, and the minimum crew required to operate the escort safety craft.
- 5.8.1 Each escort safety craft shall display the competitor's competition number so as to be easily seen from either side of the escort safety craft and the national flag of the competitor's Federation.
- 5.9 Each safety craft shall contain appropriately qualified safety personnel and the minimum crew required to operate the safety craft.
- 5.10 No competitor shall be permitted to use or wear any device which may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy. Approved swimsuit, goggles, a maximum of two (2) caps, nose clip and earplugs may be used.
- 5.11 Competitors shall be allowed to use grease or other such substances providing these are not, in the opinion of the Chief Referee, excessive.
- 5.12 The pacing of a competitor by another person entering the water is not permitted.
- 5.13 Coaching and the giving of instructions by the approved competitor's representative on the feeding platform or in the escort safety craft is permitted. No whistle shall be allowed.
- 5.14 When taking sustenance, competitors may use Part Three, Article 5.6 provided Rule under Article 5.7 is not infringed.
- 5.15 No objects can be thrown from the feeding platform to the competitors, including sustenance. The competitors shall receive their feeding directly from their representative by a feeding pole or by hand.

- 5.16** Feeding poles are not to exceed 5m in length when extended. No objects, rope or wire may hang off the end of feeding poles except national flags. National flags are allowed to be attached to the feeding pole but may not exceed the size of 30cm x 20 cm. Flags shall be fabric material with no hard edges and without any weight or other items added.
- 5.17** In all events, time limits shall apply as follows from the finish time of the first competitors:
- 15 minutes per 5 km (or part thereof) up to a maximum time limit of 120 minutes.
- 5.17.1** Competitors who do not finish the course within the time limit shall be removed from the water except that the Chief Referee may allow a competitor outside the time limit to complete the course but not be eligible for any points or prizes.
- 5.18** **EMERGENCY ABANDONMENT**
- 5.18.1** In cases of emergency abandonment of races of 10 km or less, the race will be restarted from the beginning at the earliest possible moment.
- 5.18.2** In cases of emergency abandonment for any race of longer than 10 km, the final ranking will be as reported by the Chief Referee. If 2 hours of the race have not been completed, it will be restarted from the beginning at the earliest moment possible.

Referees and Race Judges should use their whistle to address any pacing or slip streaming they observe and using the hand signals adopted by AQUA to advise the offending competitors of their need to move apart. If necessary, the race number/s can be written on the whiteboard/flipboard and shown to the competitors to advise those offending.

Race Judges, Turn Judges, Feeding Platform Judges, and Relay Judges need to inform the Chief Referee of any repeated or continual violation so it can be addressed. Referees also have the authority to intervene for any violation of the rules that they have personally observed.

Part Three, Article 5.3 is clear in that the rules relating to unsporting behaviour apply equally to the actions of a competitor's feeder/coach as to the competitor. This rule applies in particular to the actions of the feeder/coach and the instructions given to the driver of their escort boat, and also to their actions on the feeding platforms.

The feeder/coach may instruct the competitor during the race as permitted in **Part Three, Article 5.13**; however, this rule does not allow others to enter the course and give instructions to the competitors during the race.

In the case of Emergency Abandonment, under **Part Three, Article 5.18.2** where at least 2 hours of the race has been completed, the Chief Referee should use all means at his disposal to quickly and efficiently establish the positions of all competitors on the course, so that the competitors can be removed from the water as soon as their relative position in the field has been established.

Where the Chief Referee uses discretion to allow competitors over the time limit to complete the course, the results do not record a time or place, but show "OTL".

6. THE FINISH OF THE RACE

- 6.1** Escort safety craft should be stationed at the approach to and entrance of the finish funnel to ensure that only the escort safety craft authorised to do so enter or cross this entrance.
- 6.2** The final places will be determined by the Chief Referee based upon the Finish Judges' report and the finish video tape.
- 6.3** All competitors must start the race with a microchip transponder on each wrist. If a competitor loses a transponder the Race Judge or other authorized Official, will immediately inform the Chief Referee who will instruct the responsible Official on the water to issue a replacement transponder. All competitors need to finish with at least one transponder on their wrist. Any competitor who finishes the race without at least one transponder will be disqualified.

- 6.4 When, at the finish of an Open Water Swimming competition, a finish plate is available, competitors must touch the finish plate to finish the race. Any competitor who does not touch the finish plate will be disqualified.
- 6.5 The Finish Judges and Timekeepers shall be placed so as to be able to observe the finish at all times. The area in which they are stationed should be for their exclusive use.
- 6.6 Every effort should be made to ensure that the competitors' representative can get from the escort safety craft to meet the competitor as they leave the water.
- 6.7 Upon leaving the water some competitors may require assistance. Competitors should only be touched or handled if they clearly display a need or ask for assistance.
- 6.8 A member of the medical team should inspect the competitors as they leave the water. A chair, in which the competitor can sit while an assessment is made, should be provided.
- 6.9 Once cleared by the medical member, competitors should be given access to refreshment.



Transponders should be issued and received by the Clerk of Course – this also provides a check on the number of competitors remaining on the water.

For Open Water Swimming events the accuracy of the transponder technology necessitates that times only be recorded to 1/10th sec (**Part Three, Article 8.2.1**)

It is important that the video system is of sufficient resolution and clarity to clearly show the competitors as they touch the finish plate in slow or stop motion. All aspects of the video system should be checked prior to the event to ensure adequate recording and playback capability is available should it be required including all necessary cables and viewing equipment.

The finish approach needs to be clearly marked so that there can be no confusion as to the course to the finish line / finish plate.

The finish of the race should be observed by the Finish Judges, Chief Finish Judge and any Referees assigned to watch the finish of the race. Any infractions of the rules should be reported to the Chief Referee by the Chief Finish Judge if observed by the judges, or necessary actions taken to issue an infraction or disqualification if observed by the Referee/s.

8 OPEN WATER SWIMMING FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

8.1 OPEN WATER SWIMMING FACILITIES

8.1.1 START PLATFORMS

Start Platforms shall be of sufficient size to allow 60cm space per competitor plus an additional 5m. Each competitor space should be identified and numbered with number 1 farthest from the entry to the platform. They shall be of sufficient width to allow for the necessary activities prior to the start and to support the weight of the competitors and officials at the start.

8.1.2. FINISH

For Olympic Games, World Championships and all AQUA events, the final approach (**Part Three, Article 8.1.2.1**) comprise the boundary of the course, and competitors shall remain within the rows of buoys throughout their approach to the Finish.

A good method of defining the approach to the finish can be to use pool lane ropes tied end-to-end if these are available.

The finish area needs to be constructed to provide stable platforms for the Timekeepers and Finish Judges to work from, with additional space for video finish equipment and possibly media personnel, however the media area should not inhibit the Judges and Timekeepers from doing their jobs.

8.1.2.1 The final approach to the finish shall be clearly defined with markers of a distinctive colour and shall comprise the boundary of the course.

8.1.2.2 The area leading to the finish apparatus should be clearly marked by rows of buoys which narrow as they get closer to the finish wall. For World Aquatics events these buoys shall be inflatable tubes.

8.1.2.3 The finish shall be clearly defined and marked by a vertical face.

8.1.2.4 The finish apparatus should, where possible, be a finish plate at least 5 metres wide fixed if necessary to floatation devices, securely fastened in place so as not to be moved by wind, tide or the force of a competitor striking the wall. The finish should be filmed and recorded from each side and above by a video system with slow motion and recall facilities including timing equipment. For Olympic Games, World Aquatic Championships and other World Aquatic competitions this is mandatory.

8.1.3 TURNS / ALTERATIONS

8.1.3.1 All turns/alterations of the course shall be clearly indicated. Turn Buoys which are alterations of the course shall be of a different colour to guidance buoys. Wherever possible there shall be a long distance (to be approved by World Aquatics) from the start to the first turning buoy to ease congestion at the turn.

8.1.3.2 A clearly marked craft or platform, containing a Turn Judge, shall be positioned at all alterations of course in such a manner as not to obstruct a competitor's visibility of the turn.

8.1.4 FEEDING PLATFORMS

Feeding Platforms shall be of sufficient size and buoyancy for the safe operation of the platform and the feeders and officials operating thereon. A minimum of 60cm of linear space per feeder plus 5m shall be required and of sufficient width to allow storage a preparation for competitor feeding. There needs to be sufficient space on one or more platforms to accommodate all feeders. Access to the platform shall be outside of the course wherever possible.

8.1.5 ALL PLATFORMS

All Starting Platforms, Feeding Platforms, Relay Platforms, turning apparatus and Turn Judges craft/platforms shall be securely fixed in position and not be subject to tidal, wind or other movements.

8.1.6 WATER CONDITIONS

- 8.1.6.1** A certificate of suitability for use of the venue shall be issued by the appropriate local health and safety authorities. In general terms the certification must relate to water purity and to physical safety from other considerations.
- 8.1.6.2** The minimum depth of water at any point on the course shall be 1.40 metre.
- 8.1.6.3** The water temperature should be a minimum of 16°C and a maximum of 31°C. It should be checked the day of the race, 2 hours before the start, at three points around the course at a depth of 40cm. The agreed temperature will be the average of the three taken. This control should be done in the presence of a Commission made up of the following persons present: a Referee, a member of the Organising Committee and one coach from the teams present designated during the Team Leaders Meeting.

Choosing the correct venue is one of the most important decisions in the conduct of an Open Water Swimming competition, as the safety of the racing is closely linked to the site that is chosen. Some things to consider:

- Where does the water flow from and to?
- Is there a tide or current?
- What is the average water temperature for the time of the proposed swim? Is a different time of day or time of year better?
- What is the water quality and is it approved by the local authorities as being suitable for swimming in?
- Is the course free from marine traffic or other hazards? Are there commercial users that have to be considered?
- What is the depth of the water across the whole of the course? And the bottom? Are there any underwater hazards?
- Is there ready access to the start/finish area and the rest of the course, both for people and watercraft, should it be necessary to evacuate someone?
- Is there marine or amphibious fauna or flora that may pose a hazard?
- Are the facilities in the start and finish areas adequate for the number of people expected, both in terms of competitors, team, and race officials, and also spectators and public?

For each of the items above and any hazards identified, a mitigation strategy and feasibility of implementation need to be considered. Undertaking this exercise as part of the evaluation of a course's suitability will quickly identify whether the course can be easily used for the competition.

Gaining the appropriate certification from local authorities will also quickly identify a course's suitability and establish relationships with the necessary authorities that can initiate the goodwill necessary for the conduct of the event.

It is also a good idea to evaluate an alternative course if this is possible, so that planning for the race can quickly be moved to the alternative course should this prove necessary for any reason.

The minimum temperature as specified in the rules is 16°C, and a maximum temperature of 31°C measured in accordance with **Part Three, Article 8.1.6.3**.

Although the procedure for the official water temperature measurement is specified in **Part Three, Article 8.1.6.3**, it is a good idea for the Safety Officer and the Course Officer to measure the temperature in the days immediately prior to the race – this will indicate the likely conditions for race day and allow considerations to be made should a change in race time need to be considered.

Feeding platforms/crafts should be located strategically around the course, such that they are outside the direct swimming line of the race but close to it so that competitors wanting to feed do not have to swim too far off-line to do so. If possible, in closed circuit races, at least one of the platforms should be close to the finish area so that coaches/feeders can see the race finish. Feeding platforms need to be sufficiently large to remain stable during

the feeding phase when the coaches/feeders are all on the same side – consider the size or adding more platforms if necessary.

Turn buoys need to be of a contrasting colour to the surroundings and be of sufficient size to be readily visible to competitors from some distance. Where the course is such that the next turn buoy cannot be seen from the previous one, guidance buoys of a different colour to the turn buoys should be considered. Buoys used for triathlon, sailing, and other marine recreational activities have similar requirements and it may be possible to borrow suitable items from such organisations that already have them.

The finish area also needs to be clearly visible from some distance so that the competitors can clearly see it, and the finish apparatus, of a vertical wall erected within arm-reaching distance from the water surface. Flags can be a good idea to assist visibility, but also think about the wind loading and forces this can create on the finish apparatus.

8.2 AUTOMATIC OFFICIATING EQUIPMENT FOR OPEN WATER SWIMMING

The operation of Automatic Officiating Equipment shall be under the supervision of appointed officials. Results recorded by Automatic Equipment shall be used to determine the winner, all placing and time applicable to each competitor. The placing and times so determined shall have precedence over the decisions of Finish Judges and Timekeepers. In the event that a break-down of the Automatic Equipment occurs or that it is clearly indicated that there has been a failure of the Equipment, or that a competitor has failed to activate the Equipment, the recordings of the judges & timekeepers shall be official.

8.2.1 MICROCHIP TRANSPONDERS

When Automatic Officiating Equipment is used for timing of competitions in accordance with these Regulations microchip transponder technology is mandatory and should be added to the Equipment. Use of microchip transponder technology is mandatory for World Aquatics competitions, at the World Aquatics Championships and Olympic Games. Microchip transponder timing technology will be recorded officially in tenths of seconds.



8.2.2 INTERMEDIATE TIMING GATE

Where an intermediate timing gate is used it shall be placed such that it becomes part of the overall course within the swimming line of the course without deviation for the competitors. It shall be a minimum width of 6m wide at the swimming waterline.

8.3 AUTOMATIC OFFICIATING PROCEDURE FOR OPEN WATER SWIMMING

8.3.1 Any timing device that is terminated by an official shall be considered a watch. Such manual times must be taken by three timekeepers appointed or approved by the Member in the country concerned. All watches shall be certified as accurate to the satisfaction of the governing body concerned. Manual timing shall be registered to 1/10 of a second. Where no Automatic Equipment is used, official manual times shall be determined as follows:

8.3.1.1 If two (2) of the three (3) watches record the same time and the third disagrees, the two identical times shall be the official time.

8.3.1.2 If all three (3) watches disagree, the watch recording the intermediate time shall be the official time.

8.3.1.3 With only two (2) out of three (3) watches working the average time shall be the official time. When this calculation results in a value that is expressed in hundredths of a second, the final digit shall be dropped without rounding.

8.3.2 When the Automatic Officiating Equipment fails to record the place and/or time of one or more competitors in a given race:

8.3.2.1 Record all available Automatic Officiating Equipment times and places.

8.3.2.2 Record all human times and places.

8.3.2.3 The official place will be determined as follows:

- A competitor with an Automatic Officiating Equipment time and/or place must retain his/her relative order when compared with the other competitors having an Automatic Officiating Equipment time and/or place within that race.
- A competitor not having an Automatic Officiating Equipment place shall have their place established by the Chief Referee from the video recording of the finish of the race.
- A competitor having neither an Automatic Officiating Equipment place nor an Automatic Officiating Equipment time shall establish their relative order by the place recorded by the Finish Judges.

8.4 WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES FOR OPEN WATER

8.4.1 AIMS

The intention of these Regulations is to provide guidance to the Organising Committee (OC) of any World Aquatics Open Water Swimming (OWS) event on matters relating to water quality at a proposed competition or training venue.

In adherence with WHO Guidelines on Recreational Water Quality (2021), these World Aquatics Guidelines provide the following details:

- Identification of significant water contaminants;
- Levels of specified microorganisms;
- A model for sanitary inspection; and
- A combined classification matrix to determine suitability of a competition venue.

8.4.2 BACKGROUND NARRATIVE

World Aquatics hosts Open Water Swimming events in the open sea, lakes, rivers and other inland waterways, commonly over distances of 5 km or more. The Technical Open Water Swimming Committee (TOWSC) in collaboration with the Sports Medicine Committee (SMC) works to ensure athlete safety as their priority.

While Open Water Swimming Rules address a number of health and safety factors including water temperature, water quality and other forms of contamination or water hazard, these Guidelines specifically address water quality, with particular focus on the bacterial indicator organisms, intestinal

Enterococci and Escherichia Coli (E. coli). These are reliable indicators of faecal contamination from animals, human sewage, or effluent and present the likeliest risk to athlete welfare.

Open-water swimmers may be exposed to contamination from waterborne agents through inhalation, ingestion (swallowing) and by direct skin contact. Sensitive mucosal linings of the eyes, ears, nose, mouth and upper respiratory tract are potential infection entry points during prolonged immersion.

Swallowing a significant volume of contaminated water will challenge the gastrointestinal system and may cause diarrhoea and vomiting. However, these effects are determined primarily by the strain and concentration of a specific microorganism, the period of exposure and the immune status or susceptibility of the host (the swimmer).

Consequences may range from mild to moderate gastrointestinal symptoms, ear, nose and eye infections, and in some susceptible individuals, respiratory illness. In most cases however, symptoms are transient and respond to conservative medical management. However, more serious medical consequences may arise and therefore a competition venue meeting accepted safety standards will clearly minimise risks to the athlete.

The suitability of a potential venue for training or competition is determined by a combined microbial water quality assessment and survey of sanitation. The former quantifies identified bacteria while the latter involves visual inspection, identifying other pollution sources such as runoff from stormwater drains or industrial outflows. The sanitary survey also considers the influence of weather patterns, particularly rainfall, and potential effect on a venue.

8.4.3 ASSESSMENT OF BACTERIAL CONTAMINANTS

Universal agreement has determined intestinal Enterococci and E. coli as the most reliable indicators of faecal contamination in water. Acceptable levels of these organisms for safe swimming are in accordance with limits proposed by the WHO (2021), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (2017), the European Environmental Agency (2020), the New Zealand Ministry of Health (2021) and the Australian National Health and Research Council (2017).

Therefore, World Aquatics applies the following standards at Open Water Swimming venues with a distinction between tidal waters and inland waterways that account for variabilities such as salinity, tidal influence, and distribution of organisms:

cfu = colony forming unit

	Excellent water quality	Good water quality	Unacceptable water quality
Enterococci (cfu/100mL)	<100	<200	>200
E. coli (cfu/100mL)	<250	<500	>500

Table 1. Bacterial levels for sea and transitional (tidal) waters

	Excellent water quality	Good water quality	Unacceptable water quality
Enterococci (cfu/100mL)	<200	<400	>400
E. coli (cfu/100mL)	<500	<1000	>1000

Table 2. Bacterial levels for inland waterways

8.4.4 FREQUENCY OF WATER ANALYSIS

To be awarded an Open Water Swimming event, the Organising Committee (OC) is obligated to provide the World Aquatics Office with an authorised water quality analysis report from venue samples collected at the site and then again at the following intervals:

- Two (2) months from competition
- Seven (7) days prior to start of competition
- No more than 48hrs prior to competition
- Day of competition*

Water samples must be collected from three (3) different locations on the course and analysed at an authorised laboratory. The poorest result should determine the overall water quality with the following tolerance levels for respective venues.

**NOTE: Day of competition sampling, notwithstanding delayed reporting, will only be used when a change in water quality, caused by storms or other unpredictable factors, needs to be considered in the advent of illness amongst participants. Data from water analysis will guide appropriate treatment.*

8.4.4.1 FOR OCEAN AND TRANSITIONAL (TIDAL) WATERS

- pH between 6 - 9
- Enterococci not more than 100cfu/100mL
- E. coli not more than 250cfu/100mL
- Absence of algal bloom

8.4.4.2 FOR INLAND WATERWAYS

- pH between 6 - 9
- Enterococci not more than 200cfu/100mL
- E. coli not more than 500cfu/100mL
- Presence of algal bloom and scum formation in inland waterways will necessitate a test for cyanobacteria with results to be confirmed by the appropriate local health authority. A tolerance of less than 100,000 cells/mL is required by World Aquatics

(Reference: World Triathlon Water Quality Statement 2019)

8.4.5 SANITARY INSPECTIONS

A venue sanitary inspection is primarily a "subjective" visual survey, best undertaken by qualified personnel.

This inspection indicates whether the competition venue is potentially susceptible to faecal contamination from other sources. These include inflow identified by local health authorities, from nearby factories, farms, or hotels, as well as the influence of stormwater overflow after periods of heavy rainfall.

In addition, a visual inspection should record areas of stagnation, water clarity, odour, evidence of algal bloom, surface "scum" or visible pollutants such as oil film or "slick." These constitute a "checklist" of sanitary factors to be included by the potential host organisation in their bid document to World Aquatics.

Where there is demonstrable impact from weather events such as heavy rainfall, the bid document should provide clear, documented evidence of water "clearance time" to return the venue to acceptable levels of indicator organisms.

In addition, a visual survey of every venue must also identify potential hazards such tides, currents, general debris, floating logs or rocky outcrops that could affect the laying of a course or impede or injure a swimmer. These matters overlap the brief of the AQUA Safety Officer, whose inspection takes place at the time of competition.

Sanitary Inspection Factors	Excellent Sanitation	Good Sanitation	Poor Sanitation
Algal bloom	absent	absent	present
Surface contaminants (e.g. oil)	absent	absent	present
Water clarity	Visibility to 50 cm	cloudy	cloudy
Odour	absent	moderate	present
Weather effects	nil	present but reducing	present
Active aquatic life	present	present	absent

Table 3. Sanitary Inspection Checklist

8.4.6 CLASSIFICATION MATRIX FOR VENUE SUITABILITY

In meeting obligations to athlete health and safety, the suitability of every World Aquatics OWS venue must be determined by considering three data sets, namely:

1. Results of water quality analysis
2. Report from sanitary inspection
3. Knowledge of local weather impact

Consequently, a matrix of classification, modelled on the World Triathlon Water Quality Statement (2019), is proposed by World Aquatics to assist in determining the suitability of all OWS competition venues.

8.4.6.1 WATER QUALITY DECISION MATRIX FOR SEA/OCEAN AND TRANSITIONAL (TIDAL) WATERS

	Excellent	Good	Poor
2 past results E. coli <250 Enterococci <100	1	1	2
Last result E. coli 250- 500 Enterococci 100-200	2	2	3
2 past results E. coli 250 -500 Enterococci 100-200	2	3	3
Last result E. coli >500 Enterococci >200	4	4	4

Table 4 Water Quality Decision Matrix for Sea/Ocean and Transitional (tidal) Waters

8.4.6.2 KEY FOR VENUE SUITABILITY IN TRANSITIONAL WATERS

1	Excellent water quality: E. coli <250cfu/100mL or Enterococci <100cfu/100mL with excellent/good sanitary inspection and no forecasted heavy rainfall.
2	Good water quality: E. coli <250cfu/100mL or Enterococci <100cfu/mL with some deficiencies in sanitary inspection or forecasted heavy rainfall. OR E. coli 250-500cfu/100mL or Enterococci 100-200cfu/mL with no deficiencies in sanitary inspection or no forecasted heavy rainfall.
3	Fair water quality: E. coli 250-500cfu/100mL, Enterococci 100-200cfu/100mL with poor sanitary inspection and/or forecasted heavy rainfall.
4	Poor water quality: E. coli >500cfu/100mL, Enterococci >200cfu/100mL with poor sanitary inspection and/or forecasted heavy rainfall.

Table 5 Key for Venue Suitability in Transitional

8.4.6.3 WATER QUALITY DECISION MATRIX FOR INLAND WATERWAYS

	Sanitary Category		
	Excellent	Good	Poor
2 past results E. coli <500 Enterococci <200	1	1	2
Last result E. coli 500-1000 Enterococci 200-400	2	2	3
2 past results E. coli 500 - 1000 Enterococci 200-400	2	3	3
last result E. coli >1000 Enterococci >400	4	4	4

Table 6. Water Quality Decision Matrix for Inland Waterways

8.4.6.4 KEY FOR VENUE SUITABILITY FOR INLAND WATERWAYS

1	Excellent water quality: E. coli <500cfu/100mL or Enterococci <200cfu/100mL with excellent/good sanitary inspection and no forecasted heavy rainfall.
2	Good water quality: E. coli <500cfu/100mL or Enterococci <200cfu/mL with some deficiencies in sanitary inspection or forecasted heavy rainfall. OR E. coli 500-1000cfu/100mL or Enterococci 200-400cfu/mL with no deficiencies in sanitary inspection or no forecasted heavy rainfall.
3	Fair water quality: E. coli 500-1000cfu/100mL, Enterococci 200-400cfu/100mL with poor sanitary inspection and/or forecasted heavy rainfall.
4	Poor water quality: E. coli >1000cfu/100mL, Enterococci >400cfu/100mL with poor sanitary inspection and/or forecasted heavy rainfall.

Table 7 Key for Venue Suitability for Inland Waterways

8.4.7 EXPLANATORY NOTE

From the above Water Quality Decision Matrices, World Aquatics expects all OWS competition venues to meet the criteria outlined in Level 1, as Excellent water quality.

However, there will be circumstances where Level 2 (Good water quality) may also be considered acceptably safe for competition. As examples, a venue may be considered unsuitable only after heavy rainfall and reclassified satisfactory after water "clearance" or where deficiencies in sanitation such as the presence of debris, hazards or surface contaminants are physically cleared.

All decisions on venue reclassification reside with the joint Commissions of the TOWSC and SMC, or their appointee, collaboration with the OC Medical Officer.

NOTE: Water Levels 3 and 4 are unacceptable to World Aquatics for safe competition or training.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Special acknowledgement is made of the World Triathlon Water Quality Statement (2019) and the contributions of Sergio Migliorini and Thanos Nikopoulos to their Water Quality Matrix upon which the World Aquatics Water Quality Decision Matrices are based.

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ESCORTED SWIMS

When conditions or distance indicate, a competitor must be escorted. As a guide, any event with a course of 10 km or more should have escort craft for competitors. This escort may be by paddler, water ski/canoe, rowing boat or larger powerboat/yacht depending on the safety factors. The difficulties in obtaining reliable escorts, whether they are paddlers or experienced boat captains, are obvious and they are essential to the safe conduct of the meet.

The danger of boats and propellers only a few feet away from competitors is an added risk. Diesel and petrol (particularly two-stroke) fumes can be dangerous and annoying on still days. Anything that impedes the progress of a competitor is a consideration when determining the number of escorts you need. You need to establish special rules such as 'no paddlers in the start area, escort boats may not go next to their competitors for the first 500m', etc. The size and type of each escort is important. You probably do not need a huge boat (e.g. the Queen Mary), as this will inhibit the ability to get close to the competitors, but you do need a craft large enough to carry the boat crew, special safety and feeding supplies and the competitor's coach/feeder/representative and the observer/judge.

Paddlers must be sufficiently fit to complete the course. Boats must be capable of running at a very slow speed. Back-up paddlers and boats are mandatory. Boats are required to have the minimal safety equipment as prescribed by maritime regulations. It is also suggested that each escort boat have a whistle to sound and flag to wave in case of emergency. This can also be used if the crew is unsure about the course direction.

Organisers should consider the use of both boats and paddleboards as escorts. The boats support the paddleboards with back-up paddlers, food, and coach for the competitor. It may be possible, although not always necessary, to have one boat act as a hub for several satellite boats or competitors.

RISK MANAGEMENT (SAFETY)

Safety is the paramount issue in the organisation and conduct of any open water swimming event. The first step in planning an open water swim is the consideration of all safety factors. Throughout this manual you will find numerous recommendations and suggestions that minimise risks. It's up to the organiser how to implement these into your events.

All events including those of less than 10 km require safety support and this is usually provided in the form of kayaks or paddleboards to provide close support to the competitors around the course, supported by motorised safety craft to evacuate any competitors removed from the course and requiring medical assessment and support.

The local Life Saving or Lifeguard societies, Red Cross society or St John's Ambulance may be able to provide information, personnel, and equipment to assist with the conduct of a meet. Local boat, canoe, rowing, and kayak clubs may also be able to assist. One word of caution: find out in advance, if there will be any charges associated with their support.

If your event is very long and/or crosses heavily used shipping lanes, contact the local Harbour Master. Their main concern is for safety on the water, and they can be of great help. One valuable service they are usually able to provide is the notification of ships in the area of the race. They will also provide you with assistance in filling out the necessary permit requests.

If you need help with communications, local amateur radio organisations are helpful and often eager to assist.

Do not try to do it alone. There are any number of volunteer groups and organisations that are willing to assist. Try local Sea and Boy Scouts, Emergency Services Groups, civic groups, local swimming clubs, boat clubs etc. Their public service orientation can really help get jobs done that might otherwise prove unnecessarily expensive.

Don't forget to notify authorities such as local councils, police, hospitals, and ambulance services that you are staging an event. You may just require their services and with prior advice they may offer assistance. It is highly advised that organisers have public liability insurance – this is a requirement for AQUA events.

10 OPEN WATER SAFETY REGULATIONS

10.1 GENERAL CONCEPT

10.1.1 These regulations shall apply to all open water events of a distance of 5 km or greater organized by World Aquatics, sanctioned by World Aquatics, or over which World Aquatics has technical control ("Covered Competitions"). These regulations shall augment and supersede as applicable, the existing regulations established for specific events.

10.1.2 Critical elements of these regulations include:

- Submission of a site-specific Safety Plan compliant with these regulations as part of the event approval process;
- Approval of the Safety Plan by the AQUA Safety Delegate and by the AQUA Medical Delegate as a condition of event approval;
- The World Aquatics Safety Delegate and the Medical Delegate should see both plans in advance and work together to ensure both plans mesh where required.

- Appointment of an AQUA Safety Delegate who is independent of the Host Member Federation and Organizing Committee ("HMF/OC") to ensure that the approved safety plan and the requirements of these regulations are implemented on race day;
- Authority vested in anyone of the AQUA Safety Delegate, the HMF/OC Safety Officer, Medical Officer, or the Chief Referee to postpone, cancel, or modify an event where safety conditions warrant;
- Careful accounting for all competitors before, during and after the race to ensure that all competitors starting the race are accounted for at the time they withdraw or finish the race;
- All competitors must be observed during the race so that there is immediate recognition when a competitor is struggling or loses consciousness;
- There must be immediate rescue available when a competitor is in distress; and
- There must be immediate resuscitation available to address medical emergencies.

10.2 SUBMISSION OF A SAFETY PLAN TO WORLD AQUATICS

- 10.2.1** For all Covered Competitions, the HMF/OC for the competition shall submit a site-specific safety plan to World Aquatics for World Aquatics' approval. That safety plan shall comply with all requirements of these regulations.
- 10.2.2** Each safety plan shall be reviewed by the AQUA TOWSC Safety Delegate, who shall approve, modify, or reject the submitted safety plan.
- 10.2.3** No Covered Competition subject to these regulations shall be sanctioned or approved by World Aquatics without an approved safety plan in place.
- 10.2.4** Any change to an approved safety plan requested up until five days before the race must be approved by the AQUA TOWSC Safety Delegate as provided in Part Three, Article 10.2.2 above. Changes to an approved safety plan necessitated by circumstances beyond the control of the HMF/OC requested within five days of the race, or otherwise required to protect participant safety, may be approved by the AQUA Safety Delegate appointed by World Aquatics for the race.

10.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAFETY PLAN AT THE EVENT

- 10.3.1** Concurrently with the awarding of an event, World Aquatics shall appoint an AQUA Safety Delegate for each Covered Competition. The AQUA Safety Delegate shall be independent of the HMF/OC. The AQUA Safety Delegate shall be generally responsible for all matters pertaining to the safety of the competition participants and shall be specifically responsible for ensuring that the approved safety plan and these regulations are followed during the competition.
- 10.3.2** The HMF/OC shall appoint an HMF/OC Safety Officer with experience in open water safety and an HMF/OC Safety Crew responsible for organizing and implementing all safety aspects of the competition. The HMF/OC Safety Crew shall include certified local lifeguards with experience in open bodies of water who shall be involved in safety during the competition.
- 10.3.3** The AQUA Safety Delegate shall inspect the competition venue and meet with the HMF/OC Safety Officer and Safety Crew at least three days prior to the scheduled start of the competition to ensure that the safety plan remains adequate to address the conditions at the competition venue and that all actions necessary to implement the approved safety plan have been taken.
- 10.3.4** The AQUA Safety Delegate shall have authority to modify, postpone, or cancel the competition whenever the approved safety plan is not being implemented or as otherwise required to protect the safety of participants. The HMF/OC Safety Officer, Medical Officer and the Chief Referee of the race may advise the AQUA Safety Delegate on the modification, postponement or cancellation of the competition.

10.4 SAFETY PLANS AND RACE SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Each safety plan required by these regulations shall include the following minimum requirements. The implementation of these requirements is mandatory for each Covered Competition.

10.4.1 TEAM LEADERS MEETING

- (a) Team representatives must attend the Team Leaders Meeting. If a Team Leader or Team's/competitor's representative is unable to attend the Team Leaders Meeting, the competitor must attend a special safety briefing in order to participate in the race.
- (b) Safety topics that shall be included in the Technical Meeting include:
 - explanation of the course layout and hazards tides, currents or other water conditions
 - marine life
 - weather conditions
 - water temperature
 - water quality conditions
 - description of the method by which the Safety Crew will monitor swimmers
 - location of safety craft
 - description of medical support onsite and availability of hospital care
 - signal for help–float on back and raise hand for assistance
 - evacuation plan for clearing the racecourse, including description of related visual and audible signals
- (c) A short pre-race safety briefing, mandatory for all competitors, shall be held immediately prior to the race.

10.4.2 MONITORING AND RESCUE OF SWIMMERS

- a) Each competitor shall be under the direct observation of at least one HMF/OC Safety Committee member or Referee at all times during the race. The configuration of the course will determine where Safety Crew observers are positioned to observe competitors. For example, in an open course with no physical restraints, and depending on the size of the field, it is ideal to have an escort craft with a designated observer assigned to assure that each competitor is monitored. However, in a competition conducted in a narrow rowing basin, it would be impractical to have individual escort craft on the course, rather, HMF/OC Safety Crew observers may be able to follow the competitors by walking along the shore. In other circumstances, it may be desirable to organize the HMF/OC Safety Crew observers by zone. Whenever possible, given the layout of the racecourse, HMF/OC Safety Crew observer craft (boats or kayaks) should guarantee that all competitors separated from the lead group or lead competitor can be followed directly by a safety boat or kayak. The safety craft must follow the competitor or group of competitors at a reasonable distance so as to allow immediate intervention if a safety action is required.
- b) There must be sufficient safety craft or escort craft located on the course to immediately recognize when a competitor is in distress and to initiate an immediate rescue response after observation or notification that a competitor's rescue is required. In most course configurations, there should also be stationary safety craft located every 400 meters along the course, with a CPR- and life support- trained responder on board. To accomplish this, there must be sufficient designated rescue landing points along the course and sufficient CPR- and life support-trained personnel in proximity to each competitor or group of competitors.

10.4.3 SAFETY COMMUNICATION

- a) The World Aquatics Safety Delegate and the HMF/OC Safety Officer must have instant two-way communication access with: each other; all members of the HMF/OC Safety Crew assigned to observe competitors; all safety craft; personnel on each feeding platform; the HMF/OC Chief Medical Officer; the Chief Referee; and other course officials. The line of command shall be as follows: the World Aquatics Safety Delegate deals directly with the

HMF/OC Safety Officer and the HMF/OC Safety Officer deals directly and shall have the absolute power to mobilize all lifeguards and medical personnel when required.

- b) Safety Crew members assigned to monitor competitors must also be able to instantly communicate with all safety craft.
- c) Two-way radios or other communication equipment with one channel or number reserved for emergencies are required, and a backup system shall also be available.

10.4.4 ACCOUNTING FOR COMPETITORS

- a) Each competitor shall have his or her race number marked clearly on his or her body. The Clerk of the Course is responsible for the accountability of all competitors from the start of the race until the last competitor has safely completed the race. As competitors withdraw from or finish the race, the Clerk of the Course shall check off each competitor from the list of competitors who started the race.
- b) No competitor shall exit the race through withdrawal, disqualification, completion, or otherwise-without checking in with the Clerk of the Course.
- c) All competitors should wear when available whatever electronic tracking technology may be required as part of the approved safety plan.

10.4.5 FEEDING STATIONS

- a) For Covered Competitions greater than five kilometres, a floating or stationary feeding station should be available at least every 2.5 kilometres.

10.4.6 LOCAL SUITABILITY CERTIFICATE, INCLUDING WATER QUALITY

- a) The course shall be in water that is subject to only minor currents or tides and shall be free of hazardous obstacles, pollutants, and dangerous marine life.
- b) A certificate of suitability for the use of the venue shall be issued as per Part Three, Article 8.1.6.1 above. The certificate provided in connection with plan approval shall be updated within seventy-two hours of the day of the race.

10.4.7 WATER TEMPERATURE

- a) The water temperature shall be measured before the race as per Part Three, Article 8.1.6.3 above.
- b) The water temperature shall be monitored as provided above at one-hour intervals during the race. If the water temperature drops below 16°C or exceeds 31°C at any of the measuring intervals, the water temperature shall be measured again in 30 minutes and if that measurement is also below 16°C or exceeds 31°C, the race must be stopped until such time as the water temperature complies with this rule.

10.4.8 MEDICAL SERVICE

- a) The HMF/OC shall appoint as its Chief Medical Officer a physician with experience in providing medical care during endurance events. Other members of the HMF/OC medical team shall include sufficient individuals with emergency medical training (basic life support and CPR) to staff the stationary safety boats and venue medical facility.
- b) The onsite medical facility shall include basic emergency and trauma equipment, AED, and any heating or cooling facilities required by the approved safety plan.
- c) An ambulance shall be available onsite or on call within five minutes of the venue. It is recommended that a back-up ambulance shall also be available onsite or on call within 15 minutes of the venue.

- d) Where the travel time by ambulance between the venue and the nearest hospital with emergency room facilities is longer than one hour, then the safety plan shall require provision for helicopter transport.

10.4.9 SAFETY DURING TRAINING, PRE-RACE WARM UP AND POST-RACE WARM DOWN

- a) The HMF/OC must provide safety monitoring on the course during established training hours. No competitor shall be allowed to enter the course during training without an escort craft. Monitoring of competitors by HMF/OC Safety Crew observers should also occur during pre-race warmups and post-race warm downs.

10.4.10 COURSE EVACUATION PLAN

- a) Each safety plan must include a course evacuation plan to expeditiously get all swimmers and race personnel off the water and to safety in emergency situations.

ORGANISING AN OPEN WATER COMPETITION

The organisation of an open water swim event is complex and requires detailed organisation in order for it to be a success. This chapter provides a guide to assist organisers who are tasked with organising an open water or long-distance swim event. The following details can be cross referenced to the checklist (Appendix 1).

The organisation can be broken down into a team of officials, who are likely to include the following:

- **Event Organiser** – the person who has ultimate responsibility for the organisation of the event team.
- **Event Administrator** – a person able to cope with the distribution of paperwork related to the event and who can step into the organiser's role.
- **Course Officer** – person delegated with the responsibility for the marking and measuring of the site and each course (refer to AQUA definition)
- **Safety Officer** – person delegated for the Safety arrangements and development of the Risk Management and Safety Plans (refer to AQUA definition).

Other officials that should be appointed:

- **Race Referees and Judges** – refer to AQUA definition.
- **Medical Officer** – refer to AQUA definition.
- **Finance Administrator** – a person to draw up and monitor a budget for the event.
- **Race Recorder** – refer to AQUA definition.

These people form the core planning and event team. They hold responsibility for all aspects of the event, the results service, pre-event planning meetings, problem solving, assigning responsibilities, etc. It is recommended that planning should cover:

- A meeting to discuss the event.
- Meeting(s) to ensure that all formal approvals are available: e.g. Police, Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance, Local Authority, Maritime Safety Authorities etc.
- Safety review and development of a written Safety Plan.
- Organisers' briefing to ensure that all involved are aware of their responsibilities.
- Competitors' briefing to cover safety and announce any alterations to the course or other relevant details.
- Officials' briefing to ensure that all officials are up to date with the current status of the event and any safety issues.
- Media briefing to address the press, TV, local radio, etc.

Post-race meeting to confirm results, discuss procedures, event outcome and report preparation.

PERMISSIONS

In order to run an event effectively, sufficient planning needs to be in place with entry forms being made available. The starting place for this is the Local Authorities, site and landowners (as applicable) and Local Emergency Services (including Hospitals).

All preliminary notification of the event should include:

- Proposed date of the event
- Proposed venue
- Safety considerations
- Proposed start and anticipated finish
- Outline proposal of course; and alternative venues
- Estimated number of competitors.

COURSE PLANNING

One of the most important factors is course planning. There are a number of factors and guidelines that should be observed, and all need careful consideration for safety and suitability.

COURSE MEASUREMENT AND MARKING

It is important that the course is determined following local advice and historical data and measured well in advance. This is to ensure that changes to the course can be made should weather or sea/water conditions deteriorate. Consideration should be given to planning an alternative course that can be put into effect with the minimum of delay.

ENTRY FORMS AND RACE INFORMATION

Competitors, as well as officials and other interested bodies need to know information about the course. The information needs to be as accurate as possible at the time of printing and imparted on the entry form and/or information pack. The basic information should include:

- **When:** date, start and finish time, prize giving.
- **Where:** location, direction, and maps.
- **Refreshment:** arrangements in place communicated to competitors prior to their arrival at the event.
- **How much:** entry fee.
- **Health and safety information:** special local conditions, water temperature, light conditions, and anticipated water conditions.
- **Format:** river, lake or open water swims, wave starts, age categories.
- **Result:** show, when, where.
- **Disclaimers:** place a disclaimer on the entry form.
- **Medical conditions:** this information should be clearly stated on the entry form and include age, allergies, and any medication.
- **Conditions of Entry:** any special conditions of entry such as whether a coach/handler must be nominated on entry form, entries need to be submitted/signed by National Federation office, etc.

Any alterations to the published information including safety issues need to be made available either in the race information pack or displayed in a prominent position and included in the race briefing.

RACE ORGANISATION

REGISTRATION

The registration procedure needs to be clearly explained to competitors before the event. An area should be made available for registration that can cope with a number of entries. There should be a clearly defined entrance and exit point with marshals to ensure no undue delay occurs.

It is standard for registration to:

- *Check disclaimer is signed, to include medical information and ability to swim the distance.*
- *Check competitor against list of entrants to determine final list of competitors, etc.*
- *Issue race numbers.*
- *Check competitor information is correct.*
- *Check Swimsuit is approved, approved wearables only, no jewellery is being worn and nails are trimmed.*

The registration area is also a good place to have a race information board with race details and any last-minute changes to the published programme.

PERSONNEL SUPPORT

Local swimming, canoe and rowing clubs are good sources of event officials and escorts as well as local gyms, health clubs, scouts/guides, women's groups, and service organisations (e.g. Rotary).

It is important you look after and identify marshals, who will then be willing to assist in the following years or for future events. This includes feeding them, donations to their clubs, etc.

Ensure officials, are of a calibre fit to carry out the function required. Brief them on their exact duties and responsibilities as far in advance of the event as possible and ensure each official knows his/her exact location. This can be done with maps or by a site visit. Each official should be given detailed race information, water data, details of emergency procedures, radio and contact numbers and the name of the safety officer (including call sign) and race judge. In longer events, refreshments should be supplied and/or relief officials arranged.

All officials should be issued with safety equipment and clothing including weather protection and life jackets.

The following events will require marshalling and the type of venue will dictate the duties required. These may include refreshments, car parking, registration, timing, and results.

- **Open water swims:** *safety crew, start/finish official, personnel to control spectators and others; and*
- **Post-race:** *helpers are needed to clear up, take down signs, dismantle barriers, pick up litter, etc.*

ADVANCE PREPARATION

RACE BRIEFING

There should be a separate briefing for both competitors and officials, safety crews & officials. The timing of the briefings needs to be clearly advertised beforehand. The competitors' briefing should take place in an area that allows the expected number of competitors to gather and hear the information clearly. Any information updates can be passed on at the briefing.

START AND FINISH

The start and finish need to be clearly defined. The start procedure should be made known to all competitors and there should be an emergency system to either stop the event or change the course.

TIMING AND RESULTS

A timing system needs to be in place that can cope with the demands of the race. Competitors need to be processed quickly and the results can be produced by hand. In large events, a more sophisticated system may

need to be considered. If possible, the timing system and officials, should have a trial run before the race to iron out any problems. Whatever timing system is used, it should produce a list of competitors on the race day and a further list of results to dispatch to all competitors. A video system that can be used to review the finish needs to include cameras that can cover the finish from multiple angles to overcome any obstruction from other competitors or officials and be of sufficient resolution to allow easy recognition of Competitor's race numbers.

RACE FACILITIES

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Sufficient parking for competitors, spectators, and officials, suitably sign posted.
- Toilet and wash/changing facilities (competitors should be advised in advance if these are not available at the venue).
- Baggage storage and secure areas.
- Refreshments and catering facilities for competitors, officials, and spectators.

FIRST AID AND MEDICAL COVER

Medical Personnel: The recruitment of suitable medical personnel is vital. There are a number of organisations such as the St. John's Ambulance and the Red Cross. Before the event the organiser must ensure the availability of sufficient medical personnel and the local hospitals' emergency departments must be advised. This is compulsory for sea swims. There should be sufficient people to cope with a worst-case scenario particularly if the event is a sea swim or colder water swim and anticipate more than one incident occurring. It is recommended that a minimum ratio of 2 first aid professional to every 20 competitors be maintained.

Location of Medical Facilities: This is particularly important. They are most likely to be needed on open water swims at the race finish and at high-risk points on the race route as well as having basic facilities on the escort boats. Consideration should also be given to providing a fast response boat with medical facilities. These points should be identified by a risk assessment carried out by the race organiser, safety officer and appropriate medical personnel prior to the commencement of the race. All first aid points should be able to communicate with the Emergency Services on a line dedicated solely to medical and emergency communication.

Drug Testing: The relevant National Federation headquarters may notify the event organiser that a nominated Doctor or doping agency will attend the race to conduct drug testing. If this happens, the organiser should provide personnel to assist the doping control staff. The organiser is to arrange an area where the Doctor/doping staff can operate in relative seclusion.

COMMUNICATIONS

Setting up the System: A system can be technically advanced or simple, but it does need to be tried out in advance of the race. The system needs to be able to:

- Contact the Race Organiser in case of problems, queries, or emergencies during the race.
- Contact the on-site medical personnel.
- Contact external medical services quickly.
- Relay information to the commentary team.
- Contact the Chief Referee.

One practical option is to hire communication units, or to hire the units and allocate them to selected personnel. Separate channels for Safety and race officials are recommended if this is possible.

An alternative is to use mobile phones as the majority of people have them these days. This is likely to be the least costly option if it is feasible, and a list of telephone numbers can be issued to all communication officers in advance, including the central information point (you will need to check for mobile phone or radio black spots before the event).

INFORMATION

Information needs to be made available to all parties concerned. For large events, a good Public Address system can be hired, and a race commentator briefed. This needs to be audible in as many areas as possible. Appeals and calls for particular personnel can be heard immediately.

FINANCE

Race Budget: A race organiser needs to prepare a race budget. Without this it is not possible to accurately chart and calculate income, expenditure, committed funds or the balance of the account at the end of the event. A race budget needs to be approved in advance by the appropriate officers and the financial responsibilities understood. Extra or unexpected costs might be incurred from spectator facilities needed, attendance by the Police, etc.

Entry Fees: The setting of an entry fee is a decision made by the race organiser.

Financial Security: It is important that the race is able to fulfil its financial obligations. Failure to meet these commitments reflects badly on the sport, AQUA and the race organisers.

WHAT DO WE DO IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

Most events are carefully planned and well organised, but a few fail, and some of these are due to unforeseen emergencies. The purpose of this section is to plan for these unforeseen events, to reduce their impact on the event, the participants, and the reputation of the organising body.

LACK OF COURSE MARSHALS OR OFFICIALS

If an event is inadequately conducted it is likely to fail in some respects, for example in the provision of suitable escort craft. Marshals must always be alert and capable of the demands of the task.

RESULTS

The preparation of results is important to competitors and can cause frustration at the end of an event. Pre-planning and rehearsal can reduce the risk of this problem. Also consider the preparation of 'unofficial' results covering the front of the field while the race is still underway to allow media and teams to consider the result. Such a proposal also allows any queries regarding placings to be raised and addressed promptly before officials may leave the venue.

COURSE PREPARATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

The organiser should make sure that the choice of water for an open water swim is suitable for the purpose and that the competitors are not being placed in any danger due to the location or condition of the selected water.

There are a number of factors that need to be considered and documented before an area of open water is used for an event, dependant on whether a sea, lake or river swim is being considered.

- Access, condition, sufficient space and proximity of start and finish points.
- Likely water temperature (set event minimum and maximum temperature).
- Currents or eddies.
- Water quality.
- Hidden, overhanging or underwater hazards.
- Other water users.
- Minimum depth of not less than 1.40 m. at any point, including start and finish.
- Conditions underfoot at start and exit.
- Sites for medical evacuation along the course.

The organisers should consult with regular users of the chosen water – fishermen, lifeguards, canoeists, recreational boaters, windsurfers, etc.

Access to the area is very important as this will not only determine how each event should take place but also, in the event of an emergency, how emergency services would gain access to the start and finish areas and to the course.

Course design should allow for minimal congestion at the race start.

The start and finish areas should be clearly defined. The start should be wide enough so the proposed number of competitors can make a safe start free from interference from others. The finish area should be marked so that there is no confusion as to exactly when the course is completed.

The actual swim course should be marked with buoys that are clearly visible when in the water. Turn buoys should be at least 1.5 - 2 metres high in the water and of a different colour to any guidance buoys. All markers should be fixed so they will not move in prevailing water conditions or tide turns or wind. A lead boat or canoe may be required for the leading competitor. Competitors must start with swim caps marked with Identification in accordance with the rules or sequentially numbered, – ideally these should be brightly coloured.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Safety craft and/or canoes must be provided. Personnel assigned to water safety should be to the ratio to provide close support to the competitors throughout the race. In addition to canoes, motorised safety craft should be employed with full warning, first aid and warming/cooling facilities.

Emergency exit points should be marked for competitors to leave the water.

Consider what is the safe number of competitors to have in the water at any one time.

Even when the water temperature and air conditions are good it is advisable to have additional resources at the swim exit. Hypothermia can occur in relatively warm water, particularly to weaker competitors, as can hyperthermia in relatively cool water with other environmental factors coming into account when considering warming. A cut off time for the swim should be agreed with the race official/referee prior to the event. If any competitor fails to complete the course by the cut off time they should be removed from the water, as decided by the Chief Referee. The cut off time will be dependent on the length of the swim as described in **Part Three, Article 5.17**.



RACE JUDGE AND SAFETY OFFICER PRE-EVENT CHECKLIST

Reference is made to the pre-event checklists that are included in the appendices. However, in addition, it is recommended that the Race Judge and the Safety Officer have their own simplified version to facilitate rapid decision making as to whether an event should run, be postponed, altered, or cancelled.

Has permission been obtained from the Local Authority, Water and Landowners?	
Have you informed local authorities, coastguard, environmental health, local hospital as	
Have risk assessments been completed, recorded and control measures implemented?	
Are medical response and other safety critical arrangements in place?	
Have Competitors and Safety Officials been briefed?	
Have communications been checked?	
Do you have sufficient marshals and safety boats?	
Have you checked the course arrangements?	
Can Emergency Services access the course?	
Domestic arrangements, catering, showers etc?	
Water quality certificate received?	
Arrangements for shortening or stopping the event	
Alternative course?	
Water Temperature: is it within the acceptable range for the event to go ahead?	
Administration – is it robust enough to run the event?	

MEDICAL ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

The diversity of Open Water Swimming (OWS) venues demands a broad overview of the requirements for competitor health and safety. A close relationship between the event organisers and the AQUA Technical Open Water Swimming Committee is as critical for medical reasons as it is for the integrity of the course and compliance with AQUA minimum competitive criteria.

**These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the current version of World Aquatics Competition Regulations Open Water Swimming Rules.*

Briefly there are two main areas of medical concern:

- 1) Environmental conditions; and
- 2) Competitor health and safety

The appointment of a Medical Officer (**Part Three, Article 2**) is mandatory and liaison with the Safety Officer is critical (**Part Three, Article 3.12**). The duties of the Medical Officer must be carried out judiciously in accordance with **Part Three, Article 3.13** in liaison with the Safety Officer and the local Organising Committee. All international events under AQUA jurisdiction will carry requirements for doping control which is overseen by the International Testing Agency. However, these are secondary to the concerns for competitor safety and health and will not be included here. Minimum guidelines for doping control are the responsibility of the AQUA Aquatics Integrity Unit and should be considered as an appendix to these Medical Guidelines.

From the outset it must be emphasised that no set of rules will ever supersede the importance of strict, unconditional observation of all competitors at all times in every event. It is the combined responsibility of all race officials and members of the athlete entourage to remain constantly vigilant to any incident that might jeopardise competitor safety.

1: ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

In accordance with **Part Three, Article 8.1.6**, the venue and course are subject to the issue of a certificate of water standard issued by the appropriate local health and safety authority stating that it is fit for purpose. This must be made available to the AQUA OWS Technical Delegate and AQUA OWS Medical Delegate before the event can proceed. Local organizers are encouraged to arrange this authority well in advance of the event to ensure that the certificate confirming a water standard acceptable for recreational swimming, as defined by World Health Organization (WHO) standards. Water quality results must be available based upon samples two (2) months from competition, seven (7) prior to start of competition, no more than 48hrs prior to start of competition and a sample performed on the day of the competition (**Part Three, Article 8.4.4**) The fourth sample will be relayed to the AQUA OWS Medical Delegate as soon following the event as possible, indicating if any unforeseen contamination had occurred in the day or hours immediately prior to the event.

Any relevant report compiled by the Medical Officer and Safety Officer must be received by the Chief Referee prior to the start of the event (**Part Three, Article 3.8**).

Results of water quality testing should be made available to all competitors prior to the competition commencing, and competitors entering the water.

AQUA regulations demand that the venue has a minimum depth of 1.40m (**Part Three, Article 8.1.6.2**) and a water temperature of no less than 16°C, or greater than 31°C recorded at specified times and depths by a designated Commission (**Part Three, Article 8.1.6.3**). These temperatures, informed by best available scientific research, have been implemented to protect the health and safety of all competitors and in particular to minimise the potential for hyperthermia and/or hypothermia.

Wetsuits are compulsory for events with a water temperature less than 18 °C.

The Medical Officer in conjunction with the Safety Officer can advise the Chief Referee if in their opinion/s conditions are unsuitable to start or continue the competition at any time. There can be a variety of issues arising that might need to be considered, including as follows:

- If at any time during the race the water temperature drops below 16°C or above 31°C the temperature should be taken as specified in the AQUA rules and Safety Regulations. The water temperature shall be measured again in 30 minutes and if that measurement is also below 16°C or exceeds 31°C, the race must be stopped until such time as the water temperature complies with **Part Three, Article 10.4.7 (b)**.
- Excessive water flow or wave conditions will also affect any decision as well as a deterioration of weather, lightning, and light conditions.

For all open water swims alternative plans should be made in case environmental factors make the swim unsafe forcing it to be cancelled or curtailed.

It is recommended that the Safety Officer and Medical Officer ensure the absence of other course hazards including aquatic flora and fauna or the potential for any form of pollution from industrial, biochemical, or bacteriological sources.

Open water competitors should be encouraged to apply UV protection, and the organizers should ensure additional protection from natural elements at the conclusion of the event.

2: COMPETITOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

If, in the opinion of the Safety Officer and Medical Officer, conditions are unsuitable for the staging of an Open Water Swimming event the Chief Referee must be informed and recommended modifications to postpone, cancel, or

move the event to a more suitable venue must be satisfied to protect the health and safety of all competitors (**Part Three, Article 3.12.2**).

During the event, the surveillance of competitors by accompanying craft is mandatory for safety reasons but must comply with race regulations (**Part Three, Article 5**).

Competitors in obvious distress and those deemed to be incapable of continuing for a variety of reasons should be removed expeditiously from the water and assessed with appropriate urgency by a doctor. Rendering assistance to competitors in such situations should always supersede official rules of disqualification through "...intentional contact..." with a competitor (**Part Three, Article 5.7.1**).

Adequate sustenance should be available to competitors during the event in accordance with **Part Three, Article 5.13**. Competitors are encouraged to hydrate well, prior to, during and following the event.

A member of the medical staff should be positioned to observe all competitors at the completion of the event and administer medical support as indicated (**Part Three, Article 6.8**).

The provision of an appropriately equipped first aid post and medical centre is mandatory and must be part of the obligations of the Organising Committee.

In the event of a medical emergency there must be an adequate system of rapid transfer to secondary or tertiary medical services. This will demand access for motorised ambulance service and clear communication with a receiving hospital. A clear protocol of emergency evacuation must be outlined to the AQUA Medical Officer at the time of a pre-competition site visit.

COMPETITORS

NUTRITION AND FLUID BALANCE:

Competing in open water swimming events is a major physical effort, for which all competitors should have adequately trained. Competitors can expect to be in the water for 2 - 4 hours for events up to 10 km and 6 - 8 hours for long distance races. It is therefore important to recognise that the body has a finite reserve of carbohydrate and fluid and that the frequent intake of nutritional substances is essential.

It is not appropriate for competitors to wait until they feel their energy levels decreasing before stopping for nutrition. Rather, competitors should aim to complete the event with "half a tank full" of energy. This will require frequent stops over the long-distance race even though they may feel their energy reserves are adequate.

It is recommended that approximately 200-400mls of a balanced carbohydrate/electrolyte solution are ingested every half hour. This will also help in reducing cramps frequently due to electrolyte depletion. Food may also be taken but this must be in a form that requires little chewing and facilitates easy ingestion. All food and fluids should be cool, not icy cold in a setting of warm conditions and warm, not hot, in the setting of cold conditions. This will aid the delivery of food from the stomach into the lower digestive tract where the major absorption occurs.

HYPOTHERMIA (LOWERED BODY TEMPERATURE):

Prevention of hypothermia is essential. Double swimming caps will also reduce the amount of heat lost through the scalp. As body temperature is reduced, the blood vessels in the skin constrict resulting in greater heat loss through the head and neck rather than through the rest of the body. Earplugs decrease the flow of cold water against the eardrum, reducing the risk of dizziness and problems with orientation. Wool fat (anhydrous lanolin) may be applied as a skin lubricant around the neck, groin, and armpit to avoid chaffing.

(Note: Lanolin changes the sensation of cold but does not offer any significant insulation or warming effect. However, it does influence heat loss by protecting the integrity of the skin through a reduction in chaffing.)

Nutrition breaks should be brief given that exercise increases skin blood flow, thereby increasing heat loss balanced by increased muscle activity. But when the competitor stops, this balance is disrupted. The resultant increased blood flow through the skin enhances heat loss in the absence of heat produced by muscular activity. In young, inexperienced competitors, prolonged stops may precipitate hypothermia.

It is important to limit the duration of each break to less than 30 seconds to reduce these risks, however this must be balanced by the advantages of adequate breaks for hydration and nutrition replenishment.

Competitors who begin to feel cold should ingest more food by taking more stops of short duration. Food increases the body temperature because heat is produced by digestion and because the muscles require high levels of nutritional substances for maximum efficiency including heat production.

Escort crews should always be vigilant for the initial signs of hypothermia in their competitors. Early signs include erratic swimming behaviour, altered stroke rate and veering off course. At “feeding stops” support staff may recognise subtle uncharacteristic behaviours in competitors. These include confusion, disorientation, vague slurred responses, or complete disregard for coach instructions. Any competitor unable to raise his/her arms above the head, obey other basic commands or answer simple questions, should be considered “at risk” and retrieved from the water.

It is not within the scope of this document to provide the complete guide to the medical management of hypothermia. However, at some events, medical support may be some distance away and it is therefore important for first aid staff to understand fundamental principles. Hypothermic competitors must be handled gently. They should be dried thoroughly through gentle patting not brisk rubbing and wrapped in thick insulating blankets. Towels may be wrapped around the scalp and the sides of the neck for added heat retention. Protection from the wind is also essential using whatever shelter is on hand. Warm (not hot) food and fluids should be encouraged frequently in very small amounts. Contrary to common misconception alcohol must never be given to any recovering, cold patient. Alcohol depresses the central nervous system and accelerates heat loss through the dilatation of surface blood vessels.

A doctor should personally see every competitor retrieved from the water with symptoms suggestive of hypothermia. This is the point at which the decision is made to implement first aid measures or prepare the competitor for hospital transfer.

EXHAUSTION

Exhaustion occurs as the result of prolonged energy depletion through inadequate nutritional intake and may be accentuated by the effects of temperature. Hypothermia and hyperthermia may accelerate the onset of fatigue and subsequent exhaustion. The competitor often presents with the same early signs of confusion, disorientation, and erratic mood. The recognition of exhaustion and its management in Open Water Swimming is similar to that of hypo and hyperthermia and demands the same urgent retrieval of the competitor.

PAIN

The pain of repetitive activity is frequently experienced by open water competitors, most commonly in their shoulders and often after about 1 hour of swimming. They may become irritated to the point of becoming abusive but continue to obey commands, answer questions correctly and show no signs of disorientation. Support crews with knowledge of their competitor will be best to assess this situation and decide upon the outcome.

SUNBURN

Despite being submerged in the water, sunburn is a real risk particularly during long events. In all events UV protection should be used. It is important to include the area behind the ears, the back, the back of the legs and the bottom of the feet. In very long events in sunny climates, the reapplication of sun block in long events is recommended.

JELLYFISH STINGS

These may be a general problem but become increasingly more significant for those known to have allergies and extreme sensitivities. Venues with jellyfish populations are generally identified especially where competitors may have trained locally or have been on-course preparatory to the event. Precautions including the use of lanoline (Wool fat), or Vaseline (petroleum jelly) may help dependent upon the time they remain on the body. The most common symptom of jellyfish stings is the pain. If there are multiple contacts, the pain may be severe, and symptoms of nausea and vomiting may develop.

Pain may be moderated by the coolness of the water. Persistent severe pain should be reported to medical staff and treated topically or through specific drug administration. Extensive prolonged jellyfish stinging may present a medical emergency caused by the neurotoxic effect of the sting.

SWALLOWED SALT WATER

Salt water is approximately three times more concentrated than the body's internal fluids. Frequent ingestion often in rough, choppy waters, may result in vomiting. Treatment includes reassurance in the first instance and continuing observation. Persistent vomiting will cause significant discomfort and commonly results in voluntary withdrawal. Salt water may also present a severe irritant to the eyes and snug-fitting goggles will minimise this.

OTHER TRAUMA

Attacks by sharks or other dangerous aquatic fauna are unlikely. A more significant risk however exists from escort boat propellers and extreme care must be taken when manoeuvring near competitors. Wherever possible motor craft should be fitted with "prop" guards to minimise the risk of danger from this cause.

MEDICAL ACTION PLAN

The medical action plan must be outlined by the host Medical Officer and discussed with the AQUA Medical Delegate at the time of the pre-event site visit. In very general terms this plan should consider early **RECOGNITION** of competitors in difficulty; rapid **RESPONSE** and **RETRIEVAL** of the affected competitor; adequate **RESUSCITATION** where necessary and **REVIEW** and **REMOVAL** to a hospital facility if indicated.

Then Action Plan should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Sufficient personnel and equipment to execute the plan.
- Qualified personnel available on the water to identify and respond immediately to any competitors in distress.
- A medical receiving site with equipment and trained personnel to ensure evaluation and medical support where necessary for any competitor.
- A detailed evacuation plan for serious medical cases to designated hospitals or medical centres.
- Adequate communication between all medical staff. This must be a channel or method of communication used only for medical purposes.
- Detailed plans to manage hypothermic or hyperthermic competitors.
- Sufficient land, water, or airborne transportation to ensure the rapid transfer of any casualties from the water or escort boat to a medical team.

In addition, at AQUA designated Open Water Swimming events there will be an obligation on the host Organising Committee to provide trained staff and adequate facilities to undertake Doping Control in strict accord with AQUA Anti-Doping Rules. This function must be the responsibility of additional medical staff and not in any way detract from the requirements for athlete safety as outlined above. Host organisations must understand their responsibilities in this regard and comply accordingly as part of their contract with AQUA.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COMPETITORS

It is essential that competitors prepare and train well in advance for any open water swimming event they choose to enter. Ideally, the training site environmental conditions should be as close to the competition conditions as possible to include water temperature, salinity, and water motion (currents and waves).

It is suggested competitors swim the race distance for shorter races without stopping and 85 per cent of the distance for races over 10 km one month to two weeks prior to the race. This is in order to gain the necessary self-confidence and to determine feeding times, food items and support personnel needed.

No one should undertake any competitive open water event unless physically fit, in excellent health, and fully expect to finish. It is advisable for any person undertaking any athletic event to be checked by a qualified medical expert. This is especially important in distance swimming.

The competitor is responsible for all personal support needs.

COACHING

Coaches having a basic knowledge of 'pool' training programs will need to apply additional training techniques to prepare competitors for open water swimming.

There are several health concerns associated with open water swimming training and reference is made to the preceding section where major medical conditions are discussed. In particular, competitors and coaches should familiarise themselves with the important topics that impact directly upon the health and safety of all competitors. Appropriate training, adequate nutrition and general preparation for major events will minimise the risk of competitor fatigue, temperature stressors and injury.

TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS

Competitors preparing for open water events usually combine pool workouts with open water swimming training sessions. While pool training includes a number of elements not required in open water (i.e. such as turns and rest intervals), it's still necessary as a means to closely monitor speed over set distances. Open water training is necessary as a specific means of race preparation; the primary skills acquired during this phase of training are:

- navigational skill.
- ongoing feeding and fluid replenishment.
- acclimatisation to rough water conditions.
- co-ordination with race support staff (i.e. feeders and escort craft).

The proportion of work done in the pool and open water may vary from one competitor to another. Available training time and conditions usually dictate the mixture.

Pool training will usually concentrate on aerobic base, aerobic endurance, or critical velocity training outcomes. High lactate-producing training sets are generally not required; however, some maximum speed training is advised. Speed over a short distance is often useful in open water so that the competitor is able to break away from, or pass, a competitor. Naturally, training volume must be high to prepare the competitor for long competitive distances. Therefore, the recovery skills used by pool competitors are even more important for open water competitors. Coaches must carefully co-ordinate the application of long endurance training sets (and critical speed sets) with long aerobic base training sets, to allow sufficient recovery from session to session.

The mechanics of freestyle swimming are basically the same for open water specialists; however, because water conditions may be rough the competitors may need to modify his / her technique. The competitor may need to turn the head and breathe under the armpit to shield the mouth and recover the arms higher over the water. A two-beat kick is commonly used to conserve energy. Open water competitors generally have a higher stroke rate (i.e. strokes per minute) than pool competitors because of a slightly shorter stroke length (i.e. distance travelled per stroke cycle)

Open water swimming training sessions usually employ total swimming time and stroke rate as the major determinants. Since it's difficult to measure swimming velocity, stroke rate is used to define the level of intensity. The coach should plan training sessions using the tempo that will be used under race conditions. Rather than planning interval swims (as done for pool training) the coach should plan tempo swims. For example: 30 minutes of swimming at 66 strokes per minute, followed by 15 minutes at 76 strokes per minute, etc. Training sets are then constructed on the basis of stroke rate and time swum. If a group of competitors are being trained in open water, the lead position should be rotated regularly.

NAVIGATIONAL SKILLS

These are essential for open water competitors. An escort craft should be positioned at least 2-3m from, and directly opposite or slightly to the rear of, the competitor. The competitor will be able to maintain position by lifting the head regularly (i.e. about 2-4 times per minute) and sighting the escort craft. If shore markers are used, the competitor may need to lift the head forward and sight objects; the competitor must also be able to breathe to either the right or left side. Whenever possible the competitors should be positioned between the escort craft and the shoreline (note: competitors are not allowed to position themselves behind the escort craft, as this is drafting). The escort should carry a whistle to signal the competitor if required. Different wind and water conditions must also be taken into consideration. In a heavy crosswind the competitor may need to swim at an angle to stay even with the escort craft.

Long swims will require feeding and/or fluid replacement every 30 minutes; approximately 200–400ml of a liquid carbohydrate/electrolyte solution. Food requirements will depend upon body temperature (swimming in cold water requires more heat energy) and the duration and intensity of the swim. Solid food will be difficult to chew when the heart rate is elevated; therefore, a glucose solution mixed with mashed fruit is usually taken. Don't wait until the body is depleted of muscle and liver glycogen before starting a replenishment schedule.

RACING CONSIDERATIONS

The coach should obtain a copy of open water swimming rules from the race organiser. Differences may exist between 'training' conditions and race conditions; the competitor and coach should be aware of all rules and pay particular attention to the following:

- care must be taken at the start, any turns and at the finish, as competitors are not permitted to impede other competitors.
- "unsporting behaviour", including where applicable, drafting off escort craft, is not allowed during the race.
- obstructing or interfering with the progress of other competitors (note: obstruction by a competitor's escort craft is also deemed unsporting) may lead to a disqualification.
- the competitor may not receive support (i.e. to hold the competitor up) from any fixed or floating objects, as well as their escort craft or crew. The competitor may not rest against the escort craft or crew when feeding.

Both competitor and coach should be aware of any specific safety requirements to be implemented during the race. As a general rule, open water competitors will approach race day in a similar way to pool competitors. These additional points may be useful:

- pre-race meal and fluids should be about 2 hours before competition.
- review signals to be used between support crew and competitor.
- have adequate food and fluids in the support craft (keep them in water-tight containers prior to use).
- have adequate first aid supplies, including blankets (i.e. if the race is terminated due to hypothermia) in the support craft.
- be aware of any course hazards.
- take precautions against the loss of body heat and protect against sunburn.

It is often helpful for the feeder in the support craft to have a large plastic board and waterproof markers for writing messages (i.e. stroke rate, split times, etc.) to relay to the competitor. Feeding stops should be well rehearsed. Allow the boat to approach the competitor when feeding is signalled (don't take the competitor off course by making him/her swim to the boat). Prior to the race, decide on a strategy for the start; it may be impossible for the support craft to move into a parallel position with the competitor until the pack of competitors thins out.

In all races there may be general escort craft on the course (usually surf skis, canoes, or kayaks) to guide competitors. It's usually required for races with a course longer than 10 km that each competitor has a support craft.

The feeder is the person who must make all race decisions. It's the feeder's responsibility to signal feeding stops, keep the competitor on course, assess race conditions (i.e. weather) and evaluate the condition of the competitor throughout the race. The feeder must maintain visual contact with the competitor at all times and be aware of any problems. The feeder should provide verbal encouragement and information to the competitor throughout the race.

FEEDERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

In the past many competitors have not relied to a great extent on their feeders. These competitors have been successful in their efforts due to their ability to organise and understand their own requirements. However, events with stronger competition, longer distances and more open water bring added need for the best support for the competitor.

The following are guidelines for requirements of the feeder; they are not necessarily pertinent to every competitor. These requirements are:

- Knowledge of open water swimming is paramount. Experience in some form of open water or even surf swimming is an advantage.

- An understanding of the competitor, his/her dislikes, his/her true ability along with the expertise to be everything the competitor needs in the course of the event.
- The ability to organise all food, grease, blankets, seasickness tablets, sunscreens, caps, goggles. To prepare all with the least interference for the competitor prior to the event. The competitor's confidence in knowing that their feeder has everything organised is important.
- An understanding of the ocean, lake, or river waters, coupled with the ability to read tidal charts and to understand the effects of currents, winds and waves.
- Understanding the competitor's bad times and being able to bring them through these periods. A tolerance to nurse when needed and be cruel when necessary. Being able to adjust and change whatever is required to lift the competitor. This understanding can be developed during workouts and events – competitors' reactions will, of course, differ under different environmental conditions.
- Probably the most important method of knowing a competitor's own handling of a swim is his/her **stroke rating**. All competitors must, before undertaking an open water swim, know their comfort zone in relation to stroke rating. During training all competitors should have swum in open water. From these swims stroke per minute readings should have been taken. During a race, the prime requisite to the competitor is to know their stroke rating. As a reference point, between 76 and 88 strokes seems to be the comfort zone, depending on the size of the competitor. Hypothetically, from their training, 83 strokes per minute would have a competitor holding 5 minutes for 400 metres, 80/81 is down a bit to a possible 5 minutes 5 seconds, and 85/86 is too fast at around 4 minutes 55 seconds and must be slightly pulled back. Just those few strokes too early can be paid for dearly later on. However, coaches/feeders need to be aware that technique and stroke ratings depend very heavily on environmental conditions.
- Most importantly, a feeder must protect the competitor from swimming through water tainted by outboard motor fumes. Keep the competitor away from fumes blowing across the water, and have the exhaust switched off on larger vessels where the exhaust protrudes on the side of the competitor.
- Be aware of the advantage that can be gained by hiding a competitor with the escort boat from other competitors. A change in direction by one or the other can be the time that a break is made from another competitor locked on to staying with your competitor.
- Never follow the main tender boat when shore points can be sighted. Remember the ocean is a big place. A boat going ahead and being followed by the competitor will have a zigzag course. The idea with land points is to keep the competitor straight. Sight a tower, building, or hill and aim for that point. A feeder needs to make adjustments for tide and note the direction of the flow. Every twenty minutes adjustments can be made.
- To check movement, look for anchored craft or buoys between you and the shore on either side of your competitor, not ahead. By sighting just ahead of the fixed object a feeder will be able to see their competitor's progress. Hopefully you will see a steady movement of the terrain behind the anchored object.
- If the progress is slow the feeder must ascertain water movement due to the tide or river current. Water always moves fastest in the middle of the river. Shift to the shore if slow; if fast, find the best centre run to the next point, go well past any point to keep in the flow, hug the point, as there is a chance of being swung into the eddy.
- In the ocean a feeder must find the best position for the competitor. Hug the shore if possible. If not, check the tide chart for where the flow changes. The feeder must also remember that the full thrust of a tide whether flood or ebb lasts around 2 to 2½ hours; the rest of a six-hour tide time is made of building up or slowing down to the slack water period. There is no point in pushing the competitor too far. Controlled swimming is most important at this stage. Tides, although charted etc., do not always go as written – storms a hundred kilometres away can make tides run much longer than normal. By sighting etc., a feeder should be able to see the tide change, and this is the time for encouragement for the competitor.
- In open water, anchored boats will always, in still conditions, point into the water flow. The bow will point into the flow. In windy conditions an anchored boat will show similar wind direction. In wind and tide conditions a feeder can ascertain the direction of tidal flow along with an expected variance caused by the wind. Always allow a little more up wind so that miscalculations do not cause the competitor to swim directly into both tide and wind.

- If bad weather hits, the feeder protects the competitor with the boat. Place the escort boat between the side the wind is coming from and the competitor. It is amazing how much difference it will make. It will protect from waves and swell.
- If weather comes from ahead, adjust the competitor's style. Breathe further back and higher, throw hands high and over the waves, bring in a good two beat kick to keep high and for getting over the waves, increase competitor's body rotation. Most competitors should have trained in similar conditions and understand the different style requirements in these conditions.
- Know the competitor's feeding requirements and stick rigidly to their wishes. Never allow or listen to new products or whatever someone recommends on the day. If it hasn't been tried, don't change. By all means try all you like in future training sessions. The tried formula is the accepted, change should never be allowed on the day of the race.
- Have a communication understanding with the competitor, e.g. halfway through the next feed, turn a peak cap around on your head, 5 minutes to feed switch the cap back around the right way. Just watch the competitor looking for the food being prepared. Chalkboard or pad messages should always be clear and to the point. Any message must be written so that it is immediately understood. Watch that the sun is not reflecting off the board and that it can be read.
- Feeding. A good feeder will have a calm relaxed competitor taking food as quickly as possible. The competitor should not need to talk. As they are eating, they are listening, and a good feeder is telling them everything they need to know. Should the competitor have any questions it can be answered on a chalkboard soon after if a reply cannot be immediately given.
- A good feeder never leaves their competitor. It is total commitment for the whole period. You are part of the team. The feeder's eye contact is absolutely continuous. Understanding the eyes is most important. If a competitor is going to pass out, the first indication will be from the eyes. It is known for persons to be still swimming in an unconscious state.

When applying grease there are guidelines to assist in its application.

- Have two pairs of rubber gloves, one pair is for the competitor.
- If a crowd is around or modesty prevails, large towels or sheets can be used to screen the competitor. With the competitor assisting, grease should initially be applied in a downward stroking application.
- Put it on thick and force it thinner as you apply it down the body. The emphasis with grease is not the thickness but the sealing of the pores of the skin for protection.
- The competitor can apply it under costumes and the groin area. Once satisfied with the hidden parts, the competitor should leave the grease with the feeder, keeping it still and upright. Competitors are normally very nervous at this stage and all attention should be towards greasing properly, relaxing the competitor with the job done well.
- Do not leave lumps anywhere, keep it smooth and tight with special attention to the kidney area and the back of the neck.
- Do not grease under the arms below the elbows and keep well away from the eyes. Make sure the competitor's hands are clean and grease free.
- Make sure you have old towels and blankets for cleaning up and wrapping the competitor in when the event is finished. Be prepared with a longer towel or blanket that can be rolled into a sling in the event of the competitor having difficulties in the water. The retrieval of a semi- or unconscious competitor covered in grease can be almost impossible and made worse in rough or choppy water conditions.
- Be aware of what you clean up best with. Solvents etc. can work on grease but an old favourite is a very strong detergent or dish washing liquid. Rubbing is also a good way of getting warmth back into the body. If the competitor is really cold just wrap in blankets and towels until they get warm, wrap and rub the feet, stroke upwards towards the heart leaving grease on until the competitor is comfortable. If conditions are rugged, leave the competitor wrapped up until calmer conditions can be found. Relax your competitor on the journey back to port, feed warm drink and food and, if possible, on a longer trip home suggest a sleep.
- Be considerate, if you are on a boat that is obviously a pride and joy of the owner be careful with the grease. Pilots do not take kindly to having grease all over their boats and if they have problems are reluctant to make their boats available again.

Competitors when accompanied by an IRB should be aware that these boats need to shoot away from the competitor for short periods every hour or so. This is necessary to burn the oil off the plugs and stop the outboard motor breaking down. Either a pre-determined signal or writing on the chalkboard or chart can warn competitors of this. Competitors then adjust to swimming beside the main tender for a short period until their return.

Competitors should wear bright coloured swim caps, preferably not white. Yellow or orange is considered ideal. In bad weather keeping a competitor in sight is mandatory, and having a contrasting swim cap colour to the sea and the waves helps. A good torch with fresh batteries is essential with the onset of night. Diving glow sticks both on the side of the boat and out on the competitor's costume should be available.

Should a motor failure occur, keeping the competitor in sight is the main concern. Often the competitor is unaware of problems and keeps swimming. At this stage you should, if possible, stand at the highest vantage point holding one arm up and pointing in the direction of the competitor. You must keep the competitor in sight of the line of your arm, do not take your arm away, or more importantly, do not look away. In the ocean and large lakes, a competitor can disappear from sight simply from the boat drifting. Observers thinking, they were looking in the direction of the competitor may end up looking in a completely different direction.

A good feeder will satisfy him/herself with all facilities etc. of any boat to be used in a swim before the event. Knowledge of where all the supplies taken on the boat will be during the swim is important. Should the need be to call for something urgently you must be able to say where it is. Rummaging through supplies by others can lead to the losing of important equipment. Keep food in a cool box, goggles, costumes etc. in a green bag, aspirin, and anti-fog in a red bag etc.

When the race begins you know where everything is and now the only worry you have is your competitor. This isn't a pleasure cruise. For as long as the race/swim goes you stay with the competitor the whole time. The competitor is relying on you for every possible assistance. You must be in sight at all times providing the support to the competitor.

If on a boat or paddling a board or ski, remember that you're the eyes. You're up higher than the competitor and he/she must follow you. Do not follow the competitor, if the competitor drifts off it's up to you to bring him/her back to you, do not go after the competitor, make him/her aware that he/she must keep his/her direction on you. Imagine a competitor keeps pulling to the left and the crossing is ten kilometres. By the time you are almost at the finishing point your competitor will be heading for a right-hand direction, not taking into account extra you may have covered by the feeder continuing to follow the competitor.

THE ORGANISATION OF AN AQUA EVENT

Bids to stage an AQUA Event shall be submitted to the AQUA Office.

Information is outlined in the World Aquatics website regularly and full details of the criteria for staging of an AQUA Event are available from the AQUA office. Before bids are made the would-be host federation shall clearly establish the following points:

- A suitable course is available that meets AQUA Rules.
- All Safety requirements can be met.
- Certification of suitability for use from local health and safety Authorities
- Temperature limits will not be exceeded.
- Sufficient funding can be provided to cover all organisational requirements.
- Sufficient numbers of AQUA qualified open water technical officials are available to officiate during the event. Ideally, these people should be located in different hotels from the competitors.

In order to allow AQUA to make a fair appraisal of a bid, submitting Federations should ensure that the fullest details are given of the course, organising committee, funding, and media coverage.

Upon being awarded an AQUA Event the Host Federation shall notify all member Federations of AQUA details of the date, venue, and course. Course details shall include type of water (salt or fresh), temperature range, tidal/current parameters, type of escort craft, medical service, safety, and details of any competitions taking place on or over parts of the course prior to the event.

Application to compete will only be accepted from member Federations of AQUA via the GMS. Individual entries from competitors will not be accepted.

The Host Federation shall appoint a liaison officer to work with, and keep informed, through the AQUA Office the Technical Open Water Swimming Committee (TOWSC).

THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

The Organising Committee (OC) appointed by the Host Federation shall be responsible for providing the items or facilities given below, and for checking, correcting and/or maintaining the various requirements before and throughout the competition. The details given in the AQUA Handbook concerning Open Water Swimming should be carefully consulted well in advance.

THE TECHNICAL OPEN WATER SWIMMING COMMITTEE

The AQUA Bureau as the Management Committee conducts Open Water Swimming competitions at the World Championships and other AQUA events through the appointed TOWSC Commission, which consists of the

- AQUA Bureau Liaison to the TOWSC.
- the Chairman.
- The Vice-Chairman.
- and the Secretary.

with the other members of TOWSC acting as the assisting body.

THE TOWSC RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Co-ordinate** with the Host Federation on all details for the conduct of the open water swimming competitions at the AQUA World Championships and on other AQUA events.
- **Conduct a final inspection** of facilities prior to the start of competitions, including any automatic timing equipment to be used.
- Make Recommendations to the AQUA Bureau of suitably qualified technical officials from National Federations (including the Host Federation) for appointment to officiate at the World Championships, and Olympic Games.
- **Conduct meetings** for the briefings of Delegates and Team Managers of participating member Federations **two days** before the start of the competition.
- **Conduct briefings** for Technical Meet Officials who will participate in the control of the competition.
- **Prepare a report** for the AQUA Bureau.

THE TOWSC DUTIES

For World Championships, Olympic Games, and Junior World Championships, the allocation of tasks for the TOWSC will require the participation of all members of the Committee in the preparation and conduct of the competition. In particular:

ENTRIES	To review all applications and start lists.
OFFICIALS	To check all officials are accounted for.
PROTOCOL	To assist and ensure proper protocol is observed.
MEDIA	To assist the AQUA Media Commission and national officer appointed on matters related to AQUA.
RESULTS	To review and approve the ratified results list.
MEDICAL	To receive the report of the medical officer on pre-event medicals and in partnership with the AQUA Sports Medicine Committee to review the Medical Action Plan and drug testing arrangements, and implementation thereof.

SAFETY	To receive the report of the safety officer and review the Safety Plan to ensure that all safety precautions are in place for the event.
COMPETITION	To supervise all other arrangements.

For other AQUA Open Water Swimming events, these responsibilities are undertaken by the AQUA Delegates appointed to the particular event.

COURSE OFFICER is also an appointed role – this being normally sourced locally due to the responsibility of the role. Responsibilities would include the correct survey and setup of the whole course, and equipment is where applicable installed correctly and in working order.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AQUA SPORTS MEDICINE REPRESENTATIVE

A representative of the AQUA Sports Medicine Committee will also have responsibilities at AQUA Open Water Swimming events. These include both oversight of the medical provisions to ensure participant safety and doping control responsibilities, as follows:

- Review the medical plan – before, during and post competition, to include response times.
- Review hospital readiness and availability.
- Review the inherent risks of the specific host site to include indigenous flora and fauna.
- Review all evacuation plans.
- Receive and approve the water quality tests (3 prior to the event and one on the day of the event).
- Participate in the Team Leaders Meeting, addressing the safety aspects and doping control.
- Perform doping control duties – coordination of selection of finish places to be tested in cooperation with the WADA/Testing agent on site in a random fashion and oversight of the testing process, chain of custody of the samples process until delivery to a WADA approved laboratory, and notation of any irregularities of testing or processing.
- Work in coordination with local Medical Officers, Safety Officers and the AQUA Safety and Technical Delegates.
- Participate in recommendations to alter the course site or length while not compromising athlete safety and having all water quality information and medical plans for any site change.
- Review of the course for medical hazards.

THE COURSE

Certification of the length of the course (preferably by GPS) and suitability of the water must be provided to the Event Course Officer, on behalf of the OC, and then submitted to AQUA for approval.

Course Identification. The course is to be clearly marked with distance markers, where practical, every 1 km along the course and all alterations/turns to be clearly marked and observed by a Turn Judge. A chart clearly showing the course and any/all turns is to be provided for each competitor and each Race Judge. For events 10 km and above, where escort safety craft are utilised, a distinctive marker is to be placed to indicate, at both start and finish areas, the point at which escort safety craft may join or must leave their competitors.

The following **facilities/equipment** are to be provided in addition to those given for the Start and Finish areas:

- Suitable boats for the Chief Referee and Referees to be used and directed entirely at the Referee's discretion.
- Transport to take all Turn Judges to their allocated positions and to retrieve them immediately after the last competitor has passed, or upon the Referee declaring the event complete.
- A suitable boat to allow the TOWSC Commission and VIPs to view the competition.
- Safety boats as required, having regard to the course.
- For events with a course of more than 10 km, where escort safety craft are utilised, a suitable escort boat for each competitor. The boat to have sufficient capacity to carry the minimum crew required to work the boat efficiently, plus the Race Judge and the Competitor's Representative.

- A suitable lead boat that will maintain a position approximately 50 metres ahead of the leading swimmer.
- Landing points along the course at which withdrawn competitors can be landed and evacuated.
- Points along the course at which patients can receive immediate treatment.
- Spare boats able to substitute should one in service become inoperable - in particular escort boats.
- A supply boat able to provide food and refreshments to all boat occupants throughout the race.
- The start line marking apparatus to be secure, safe and in proper working order.
- Where automatic officiating equipment is used, it must be installed and maintained as approved by the TOWSC, including:
 - Automatic timing system, using a finish plate at the finish, and microchip transponder technology.
 - Video recording facilities with multiple recording angles and slow motion/stop motion replay.
- Audio-Visual System for Starter.
- Public Address System.
- Provision of backup hand timing equipment.
- The finishing point to be checked as securely fixed, safe and in proper working order.
- Turn Judges' positions to be checked and secure.
- Turn or alteration points to be clearly marked.
- Necessary chairs, weatherproof clothing, life jackets, communications equipment and recording books to be issued to all appropriate Officials.
- Suitable containers for competitors' equipment, their safe storage and transportation to the finish point to be arranged.
- Equipment to be distributed to all safety craft and personnel including communications equipment, First Aid equipment, spare towelling material and blankets.

PRE-RACE FACILITIES

The following facilities are to be provided prior to the race day.

- Medical inspection room.
- Briefing meeting room.
- Officials briefing room.
- Course inspection by Competitors, Team Officials and Race Officials.

START AREA

The following facilities are to be provided in the start area:

- Changing rooms for Competitors and their Representatives.
- Changing rooms for Officials.
- Room or covered/windproof area for greasing/awaiting start.
- Receptacles for waste material.
- On site medical evaluation and treatment facilities.
- Seating.
- Suitable containers for competitors' equipment which is not going on a boat.
- Secure stowage and transportation of items above.
- Toilet facilities and clean drinking water.
- Facilities for providing hot water for flasks.
- Waterproof marking pens/ stamps for marking competitors with their numbers.
- A suitable area for warm-up.
- Area for final Race Officials' briefing.
- Area for Boat Crew and Safety briefing.
- Suitable crowd control personnel and equipment to keep the water entry point clear.
- Spectator accommodation with clear view of start.
- VIP seating with clear view of start.
- Flagstaff for Host Nation's National flag, Host Association's flag and the AQUA flag.
- Display of National flags for all Nations competing.

- Public Address System and Timing Display Equipment.
- Refreshment room for VIPs.

FINISH AREA

The following facilities are to be provided in the vicinity of the finish point:

- A dais for honouring Competitors.
- National flags of all Nations competing.
- The Host Nation's National flag, the Host Association's flag and the AQUA flag.
- Sufficient crowd control personnel and equipment.
- Medical treatment area.
- Media interview area.
- Drug testing rooms.
- Seating arrangements for VIP's and officials.
- Information board giving current race data.
- Facilities for spectators giving clear view of finish.
- Landing facilities for personal equipment.
- Competitors recovery area
- Provision of competitors' equipment that had been left in start area.
- Showers and changing facilities.
- Public Address System and Timing Display Equipment.
- Supply of drinks and refreshments for Competitors, Coaches and Boat Crews and Race Officials.
- Provision of refreshments for officials and VIPs on site.
- Results publication facilities.
- Transport to take competitors back to accommodation.

COMMUNICATIONS

GENERAL AND SPECIFIC

All Competitors and Officials are to be given accurate **information in verbal and written form** clearly indicating any tidal/current flows that will in any way affect the course during the championships. In tidal waters the time of tide change and rate of water movement are to be given.

For events 10 km and above, where escort safety craft are utilised, the **pick-up point** when escort boats can get alongside their competitors clear of the congested start area is to be clearly marked as should be the designated point, at the finish, at which boats must leave the competitor.

The public address system is to give a **time check** as authorised by the Chief Timekeeper **prior to** the start to allow all officials and spectators or interested persons to synchronise their watches.

A **communications plan** is to be established. The "**Primary**" net shall include the Referee, the Safety Officer, Course Officer, and the Medical Officer plus a member of the Management Committee at the finish area. This net is to be used for the communications of urgent information only.

The "**Secondary Working**" net is to include Safety Personnel and secondary Race Officials and is to be used as the main linking system between all areas of the championships and back-up facilities.

The "**Secondary Working**" net can be used for passing up-to-date positions to the Announcer and Information Board Operator at the finish point. All communications are to be conducted in English and the national or designated language of the Host Federation. An international phonetic alphabet is strongly suggested. Ex. Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc.

All those concerned with the event are to be provided with **detailed maps** which clearly show the accommodation, briefing, medical inspection, start, finish and presentation venues together with an appropriate timetable.

Full **press facilities** are to be provided including access to telephone, fax, email and other such means of communications as necessary.

Visual media requirements should be provided to enable film or television teams to have access to all stages as appropriate.

Printing and photocopying facilities shall be provided to enable a rapid results list to be produced immediately after the championships are declared closed. All Competitors and Team Officials shall be issued with a ratified results list prior to the presentation ceremony.

CHAMPIONSHIP OFFICIAL EXPLANATORY NOTES

The following is intended to give guidance to Championship Officials on the application of the Championship Rules.

The TOWSC will appoint officials from Continents and the Host Federation in accordance with **Part One, Article 11**.

"The World Aquatics Technical Committees will propose Technical Officials (Judges and Referees) to act at the Olympic Games or World Championships from the current World Aquatics Officials Lists in the respective sport, for approval by the World Aquatics Bureau or World Aquatics Executive."

Officials will be assigned to roles by the TOWSC for AQUA Championships and Olympic Games, and by the Chief Referee (with the approval of the AQUA Technical Delegate) for other AQUA events. Usually, assignments are made prior to arrival on-site for a championship, but are subject to further review and refinement once all officials have arrived.

DUTIES OF OFFICIALS

Duties of officials are explained in detail earlier in this manual.

Officials should liaise with their respective Chiefs to ensure they are aware of specific practices that may have been adopted in conjunction with the Organising Committee for a particular competition to ensure the smooth running and presentation of the Championship or competition.

The TOWSC Secretary or Organising Committee will be able to provide a schedule of meetings and reporting times for Championship activities, details for uniform collection, etc.

It is a good idea to obtain the local contact numbers for the TOWSC Commission or AQUA Technical Delegate so that you can inform them if anything should happen that may affect participation once you have arrived in the host city for the competition.

THE ANNOUNCER shall:

- Welcome competitors and spectators.
- Introduce them to Open Water Swimming.
- Introduce Principals: Race Officials, Organisers, Sponsors, Elected Officials, etc.
- Describe the course, the event, when to start day's other events, conditions.
- Explain safety measures:
 - Head count,
 - Paddlers,
 - Escorts,
 - Lifeguards,
 - Doctor,
 - Retirement procedures.
- Announce notables present:
 - Olympic Competitors,
 - World Record Holders etc.
- Keep an eye on the finish area and announce accordingly.

Announce race progress and final results and advise where they are posted.

CONCLUSION

The AQUA TECHNICAL OPEN WATER SWIMMING COMMITTEE believes that this Manual will be of help to competitors, coaches and other persons who may be involved in Open Water Swimming. We hope that this resource will assist to organise and encourage the development of Open Water Swimming Competitions all around the world.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FINA Open Water Swimming Guidelines, 1995

FINA Long Distance and Marathon Swimming Manual 1999

FINA HANDBOOK 2009-2013 and ADDENDUM

British Swimming – Open Water Event and Safety Guidelines 2004

World Aquatics Rules & Regulations: Open Water Swimming World Cup 2024

USA Swimming – Open Water Meet Managers' Guide

Swimming Australia – Open Water Swimming Rules

Swimming New South Wales (Australia) – Open Water Swimming Technical Officials Training Notes 2007

Collective input from World Aquatics TOWSC membership

Dr. Paul Mark, Perth, Western Australia

Prof. David Gerrard, World Aquatics Sports Medicine Committee



APPENDIX 1 REGULATIONS FOR AQUA COMPETITIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- General Concepts.
- Submission Of a Safety Plan to World Aquatics.
- Implementation Of the Safety Plan at The Competition.
- Specific Safety Plans and Race Safety Implementation.
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GENERAL CONCEPTS

- 1.1 These regulations shall apply to all open water events of a distance of 5 km or greater organized by AQUA, sanctioned by AQUA, or over which AQUA has technical control ("Covered Competitions"). These shall augment the AQUA By-Laws and Competition Regulations **Part One – Rules Applicable to all Aquatics Sports**, and **Part Three Open Water Swimming Rules**, and shall augment and supersede as applicable, the existing regulations established for specific events (e.g., AQUA Open Water Swimming World Cup regulations).
- 1.2 Critical elements of these regulations include:
- Submission of a site-specific safety plan compliant with these regulations as part of the event approval process;
 - Approval of that safety plan by an AQUA TOWSC Safety Representative as a condition of event approval;
 - Appointment of an AQUA Safety Delegate who is independent of the Host Member Federation and Organizing Committee ("HMF/OC") to ensure that the approved safety plan and the requirements of these regulations are implemented on race day;
 - Authority vested in anyone of the AQUA Safety Delegate, the HMF/OC Safety Officer, or the Chief Referee to postpone, cancel, or modify an event where safety conditions warrant;
 - Careful accounting for all competitors before, during and after the race to ensure that all competitors starting the race are accounted for at the time they withdraw or finish the race;
 - All competitors must be observed during the race so that there is immediate recognition when a competitor is struggling or loses consciousness;
 - There must be immediate rescue available when a competitor is in distress; and
 - There must be immediate resuscitation available to address medical emergencies.

SUBMISSION OF A SAFETY PLAN TO AQUA

- 2.1 For all Covered Competitions, the HMF/OC for the competition shall submit a site-specific safety plan to AQUA for AQUA's approval. That safety plan shall comply with all requirements of these regulations.
- 2.2 Each safety plan shall be reviewed by the AQUA TOWSC Safety Representative, who shall approve, modify, or reject the submitted safety plan.
- 2.3 No Covered Competition subject to these regulations shall be sanctioned or approved by AQUA without an approved safety plan in place.
- 2.4 Any change to an approved safety plan requested up until five days before the race must be approved by the AQUA TOWSC Safety Representative as provided in **Article 2.2** above. Changes to an approved safety plan necessitated by circumstances beyond the control of the HMF/OC requested within five days of the race, or otherwise required to protect participant safety, may be approved by the AQUA Safety Delegate appointed by AQUA for the race.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAFETY PLAN AT THE COMPETITION

- 3.1 Concurrently with the awarding of an event, AQUA shall appoint an AQUA Safety Delegate for each Covered Competition. The AQUA Safety Delegate shall be independent of the HMF/OC. The AQUA Safety Delegate shall be generally responsible for all matters pertaining to the safety of the

- competition participants and shall be specifically responsible for ensuring that the approved safety plan and these regulations are followed during the competition.
- 3.2** The HMF/OC shall appoint an HMF/OC Safety Officer with experience in open water safety and an HMF/OC Safety Crew responsible for organizing and implementing all safety aspects of the competition. The HMF/OC Safety Crew shall include certified local lifeguards with experience in open bodies of water who shall be involved in safety during the competition.
- 3.3** The AQUA Safety Delegate shall inspect the competition venue and meet with the HMF/OC Safety Delegate and Safety Committee at least three days prior to the scheduled start of the competition to ensure that the safety plan remains adequate to address the conditions at the competition venue and that all actions necessary to implement the approved safety plan have been taken.
- 3.4** The AQUA Safety Delegate shall have authority to modify, postpone, or cancel the competition whenever the approved safety plan is not being implemented or as otherwise required to protect the safety of participants. The HMF/OC Safety Officer and the Chief Referee of the race may advise the AQUA Safety Delegate on the modification, postponement or cancellation of the competition.

SPECIFIC SAFETY PLANS AND RACE SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Each safety plan required by these regulations shall include the following minimum requirements. The implementation of these requirements is mandatory for each Covered Competition.

4.1 TEAM LEADERS MEETING

- Athlete representatives must attend the Technical Meeting. If a competitor or competitor's representative is unable to attend the Technical Meeting, the competitor must attend a special safety briefing in order to participate in the race.
- Safety topics that shall be included in the Technical Meeting include:
 - Explanation of the course layout and hazards;
 - Tides, currents or other water conditions.
 - Marine life.
 - Weather conditions.
 - Water temperature.
 - Water quality conditions.
 - Description of the method by which the Safety Committee will monitor swimmers.
 - Location of safety craft.
 - Description of medical support onsite and availability of hospital care.
 - Signal for help-float on back and raise hand for assistance.
 - Evacuation plan for clearing the race course, including description of related visual and audible signals.
 - A short pre-race safety briefing, mandatory for all swimmers, shall be held immediately prior to the race.

4.2 MONITORING AND RESCUE OF COMPETITORS

- Each competitor shall be under the direct observation of at least one HMF/OC Safety Crew member or Referee at all times during the race. The configuration of the course will determine where Safety Crew observers are positioned to observe competitors. For example, in an open course with no physical restraints, and depending on the size of the field, it is ideal to have an escort craft with a designated observer assigned to assure that each competitor is monitored. However, in a competition conducted in a narrow rowing basin, it would be impractical to have individual escort craft on the race course, rather, HMF/OC Safety Crew observers may be able to follow the competitors by walking along the shore. In other circumstances, it may be desirable to organize the HMF/OC Safety Crew observers by zone;
- Whenever possible, given the layout of the race course, HMF/OC Safety Crew observer craft (boats or kayaks) should guarantee that all competitors separated from the lead group or lead competitor can be followed directly by a safety boat or kayak. The safety craft must follow the competitor or group of

competitors at a reasonable distance so as to allow immediate intervention if a safety action is required; and

- There must be sufficient safety craft or escort craft located on the course to immediately recognize when a competitor is in distress and to initiate an immediate rescue response after observation or notification that a competitor's rescue is required. In most course configurations, there should also be stationary safety craft located every 400 m along the course, with a CPR- and life support-trained responder on board. To accomplish this, there must be sufficient designated rescue landing points along the course and sufficient CPR- and life support-trained personnel in proximity to each competitor or group of competitors.

4.3 SAFETY COMMUNICATION

- The AQUA Safety Delegate and the HMF/OC Safety Officer must have instant two-way communication access with: each other; all members of the HMF/OC Safety Crew assigned to observe competitors; all safety craft; personnel on each feeding platform; the HMF/OC Chief Medical Officer; the Chief Referee; and other course officials. The line of command shall be as follows: the AQUA Safety Delegate deals directly with the HMF/OC Safety officer and the HMF/OC Safety Officer deals directly and shall have the absolute power to mobilize all lifeguards and medical personnel when required, and
- Safety Crew members assigned to monitor competitors must also be able to instantly communicate with all safety craft.
- Two-way radios or other communication equipment with one channel or number reserved for emergencies are required, and a backup system shall also be available.

4.4 ACCOUNTING FOR COMPETITORS

- Each competitor shall have his or her race number marked clearly on his or her body. The Clerk of the Course is responsible for the accountability of all competitors from the start of the race until the last competitor has safely completed the race. As competitors withdraw from or finish the race, the Clerk of the Course shall check off each competitor from the list of competitors who started the race.
- No competitor shall exit the race through withdrawal, disqualification, completion, or otherwise - without checking in with the Clerk of the Course.
- All competitors should wear when available whatever electronic tracking technology may be required as part of the approved safety plan.

4.5 FEEDING STATIONS

For races greater than five kilometres, a floating or stationary feeding station should be available at least every 2.5 kilometres.

4.6 LOCAL SUITABILITY CERTIFICATE, INCLUDING WATER QUALITY

- The course shall be in water that is subject to only minor currents or tides and shall be free of hazardous obstacles, pollutants, and dangerous marine life.
- A certificate of suitability for the use of the venue shall be issued by the appropriate local health and safety authorities. In general, the certification must relate to water purity and to physical safety from other considerations. The certificate provided in connection with plan approval shall be updated within seventy-two hours of the day of the race.

4.7 WATER TEMPERATURE

- The water temperature shall be measured 2 hours before the start of the race and must be a minimum of 16°C and a maximum of 31°C. The water temperature shall be certified by the AQUA Safety Delegate and the HMF/OC Safety Officer as measured at three points around the course by an appointed Commission being: a Referee, a member of the Organising Committee (OC), and one coach from the teams present designated during the Team Leaders meeting, at a depth of 40 centimetres. The agreed temperature will be average of the three taken.
- The water temperature shall be monitored as provided above at one-hour intervals during the race. If the water temperature drops below 16°C or exceeds 31°C at any of the measuring intervals, the water

temperature shall be measured again in 30 minutes and if that measurement is also below 16°C or exceeds 31°C, the race must be stopped.

4.8 MEDICAL SERVICE

- The HMF/OC shall appoint as its Chief Medical Officer a physician with experience in providing medical care during endurance events. Other members of the HMF/OC medical team shall include sufficient individuals with emergency medical training (basic life support and CPR) to staff the stationary safety boats and venue medical facility.
- The onsite medical facility shall include basic emergency and trauma equipment, AED, and any heating or cooling facilities required by the approved safety plan.
- An ambulance shall be available onsite or on call within five minutes of the venue. A back-up ambulance shall also be available onsite or on call within 15 minutes of the venue.
- Where the travel time by ambulance between the venue and the nearest hospital with emergency room facilities is longer than one hour, then the safety plan shall require provision for helicopter transport.

4.9 SAFETY DURING TRAINING, PRE-RACE WARM UP AND POST-RACE WARM DOWN

The HMF/OC must provide safety monitoring on the course during established training hours. No competitor shall be allowed to enter the course during training without an escort craft. Monitoring of competitors by HMF/OC Safety Committee observers should also occur during pre-race warm ups and post-race warm downs.

4.10 COURSE EVACUATION PLAN

Each safety plan must include a course evacuation plan to quickly get all competitors and race personnel off the water and to safety in emergency situations.

NO FINISH REQUIREMENT

No competitor shall receive points or prize money for a race that the competitor does not finish. However, notwithstanding any other rule to the contrary, there shall be no requirement for a competitor to finish any particular race to which these regulations apply (including those that are a part of the AQUA Open Water Swimming World Cup) in order to receive final point standings or prize money in the series.

APPENDIX 2

WORLD AQUATICS OPEN WATER SWIMMING WORLD CUP RULES & REGULATIONS 2024 VERSION 1ST JANUARY 2024

1. **General Concept**
2. **Participation, Entries & Competition Format**
3. **Points System & Distribution**
4. **Prize Money & Awards**
5. **Technical Officials & Judges**
6. **Visa's & Transportation**
7. **Accommodation & Meals**
8. **Appendix 1 – Points Distribution**

1 **GENERAL CONCEPT**

The World Aquatics Bureau approves the organisation of the World Aquatics Open Water Swimming World Cup (OWSWC). The OWSWC is an annually staged elite level global competition series.

The OWSWC will consist of a number of stops staged by Organising Committees "OCs" under the recognition of Host National World Aquatics Member Federations ("HMF's") and staged throughout the year on dates to be approved by World Aquatics.

World Aquatics owns all rights in the World Cup and its competitions, except where granted to the HMF as set out in the staging agreement between World Aquatics and the HMF.

The OWSWC shall be open to participation by all World Aquatics affiliated Federations (except those suspended)

All OWSWC stops will be conducted according to the World Aquatics Open Water Swimming Rules and Regulations defined herein this document.

2 **PARTICIPATION, ENTRIES & COMPETITION FORMAT**

PARTICIPATION :

Entries will be accepted only from World Aquatics National Member Federations (with the exception of suspended Federations).

A coach can be responsible for up to two (2) competitors in the water at the same time. The team representative (team leader, coach) is responsible for representing the competitors at the Team Leaders Meeting and feeding them during the event.

A competitor without a coach/handler present will not be allowed to start the race. Each National Federation that has entered one or more competitors in an event must also have at least one team representative (team leader, coach) present.

Each HMF shall be obliged to ensure the participation of its best swimmers (Olympic Games, World Aquatics World Aquatics World Championship medallists) with the Host Country and shall ensure the attendance of these swimmers in all other Stops. Having the medallists attending any STOP of the Series will enhance the promotion of the Stop (i.e. clinics, master class, etc.) and development of Swimming.

ENTRY PROCESS & REGISTRATION:

All National Federations registration and entries must be done online through the World Aquatics General Management System (GMS) via <https://data.worldaquatics.com> Each National Federation will access the system to complete their registrations before the designated deadline for each stop.

FINAL ENTRIES:

Final Entries are to be submitted through World Aquatics GMS no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the event. The HMF/OC is not obliged to guarantee or provide any logistical assistance for those participants that do not meet this deadline.

INFORMATION BULLETIN:

The HMF/OC, in collaboration with World Aquatics, shall create an information bulletin (including entry process, official hotel & transportation information, venue and course information, prize money distribution, etc.) to be shared with all World Aquatics Member Federations and World Aquatics at least 60 days prior to each competition.

COMPETITOR WITHDRAWAL:

If any competitor entered by his/her national federation subsequently withdraws, is withdrawn or otherwise does not participate in the competition at any time during the fourteen (14) days prior to the competition without extraordinary reasons or without providing World Aquatics with the necessary evidence in writing, then the national federation concerned shall pay a penalty fee of five hundred United States Dollars (US\$ 500) to the HMF/OC to cover any costs incurred by the late withdrawal of the competitor.

TEAM LEADERS MEETING:

The HMF/OC, in collaboration with World Aquatics, shall organise a Team Leaders Meeting on the day before the first day of competition, not later than 18:00. The World Aquatics Technical Delegate shall chair the Team Leaders Meeting, supported by the World Aquatics Sport Manager and the OC. This will be the only opportunity for last minute entry changes.

EVENT PROGRAM: 2–3-day competition format. Order of the events to be decided by World Aquatics & OC depending on the dates of the competition. Information will be published in the information bulletin. There shall be three (3) days of official training before the competition.

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS: 10 km

- Each individual event will have a separate race for Men and Women
- The World Aquatics Technical Delegate and World Aquatics Safety Delegate will decide on the start of the race.
- There will be one start for the Men's race and one start for the Women's race.
- For races of more than 50 competitors, the World Aquatics Delegates shall have the discretion to split the start of each race.
- For individual events, the starting position for the competitors will be decided by random draw at the Team Leaders Meeting.

TEAM EVENT: 4 x 1500 m Mixed Team Relay

- 2 men and 2 women per team (1500 m each).
- The World Aquatics Technical Delegate and World Aquatics Safety Delegate will decide on the start of the race.
- Exchange will be done by using the relay exchange platform.
- Each National Federation will be able to enter up to 2 teams for the event (only 1 team will be eligible for the medals & prize money).
- Note: Should less than a minimum of 4 National Federations be registered for the 4 x1 500 m Mixed Team Relay event by the registration deadline, World Aquatics and the Local Organising Committees reserve the right to cancel the Mixed 4 x1 500 m Team Relay event.
- For the Team Relay the starting position of the team on the starting platform will be designated by random draw at the Team Leaders Meeting. The competitors may swim in any order within the team.

Mass Participation Event: As a complementary part of the event program, the HMF/OC can organise a Mass Participation Event with one or more open races, on the same day as, but not during the Event elite race(s), with entry open to any participants. This event(s) will be considered as a complementary part of the World Cup, but not a World Aquatics Event. The HMF/OC shall be the sole and entire responsible of the Mass Participation Event and cover all the costs.

3 POINTS SYSTEM & DISTRIBUTION

POINTS SYSTEM:

- For the 10 km, points will be awarded to the competitors depending upon their race finishing position. Competitors may accumulate points at each stop in which they participate and finish, with their total points counting towards the overall final rankings for each year.
- For the 10 km there will be a separate ranking based on points awarded at 3 designated sprints along the race, at each stop. Points will be accumulated towards a separate overall ranking at the end of the season.

POINTS DISTRIBUTION:

- Points distribution for the overall ranking:

Position / Points	10 km
1st	800
2nd	700
3rd	600
4th	550
5th	500
6th	450
7th	400
8th	350
9th	300
10th	250
All other finishers	As per Appendix 1

NEW: Points distribution for the sprint ranking:

Position / Points	First Sprint	Second Sprint	Third Sprint
1st	40	30	20
2nd	30	20	17
3rd	20	18	15
4th	18	16	13
5th	16	14	11
6th	14	12	10
7th	12	10	8
8th	10	8	6
9th	8	7	4
10th	5	3	2

NOTE:

- Exact laps for the sprints will be confirmed within each stop's Information Bulletin, depending on the set up of the 10 km course. Example: on a 6-lap course, lap 1, 3 and 5 will be the laps counted for the first, second and third sprint respectively.
- The intermediate gate and the transponder will be used to determine the position of each competitor at the sprint. In the scenario of a close sprint, video replay will be used to determine the sprint ranking. The head of the athlete reaching the line will be considered to determine the ranking positions.
- Any competitors who do not finish the race or who are disqualified will receive zero (0) points.
- Any competitors who the Technical Officials have reason to believe have colluded and/or agreed to finish with a tie, will be subject to disqualification.
- In case of a tie: Tied positions receive same ranked points. Ranks in the next lower ranking are skipped.

4 PRIZE MONEY & AWARDS

EACH STOP:

- 10 km Prize Money: Each HMF/OC shall pay a minimum net total amount of thirty thousand United States dollars (US\$ 30.000) equally distributed between men and women, as follows:

Position	Prize Money
1st	US\$ 3,500
2nd	US\$ 3,000
3rd	US\$ 2,500
4th	US\$ 1,700
5th	US\$ 1,500
6th	US\$ 1,200
7th	US\$ 950
8th	US\$ 650

- Mixed Team Relay Prize Money: World Aquatics shall pay a minimum net total amount of ten thousand United States dollars (US\$ 10.000) distributed as follows:

Position	Prize Money*
1st	US\$ 5,000
2nd	US\$ 3,000
3rd	US\$ 2,000

* Only one team per National Federation will be entitled to Prize Money

AWARDS

- **"World Cup Leader"** awarded to the overall Leader (men & women) of the 10 km: The current World Cup overall leader in 10 km will carry the title to the following stop.
- **"World Cup Sprint Leader"** awarded to the overall Leader (men & women) of the sprint points within the 10 km: The current overall leader in the sprint ranking will carry the title to the following stop.
- **"World Cup Junior Leader"** Awarded to the overall best ranked young athlete* (men & women) at the 10 km event. The current overall leader of the junior ranking will carry the title to the following stop.
- Age to be eligible for this ranking: 19 years old and under, as of December 31

NOTE:

- The method of the distribution of the prize money shall be announced to the competitors at each stop during the Managers/Representatives Meeting.
- The total amount of the prize money must be paid to the competitors without any deductions.
- In case there are less than eight (8) finishers (for the 10 km Men & Women) and three (3) finishers (for the Mixed Team Relay), then all the prize money will be redistributed amongst the finishers as determined by the Technical Delegate.
- The National Federation of all competitors winning prize money will inform the HMF as to whether the prize money will be paid to the National Federation or directly to the athlete.
- In case of a tie, tied athletes/teams all receive the assigned prize money for the rank.
- In case of emergency abandonment due to weather conditions or other unpredictable circumstances **Section Three, Article 5.18.1** from the Competitions Regulations shall prevail. If the race cannot be re-started resulting in cancellation, there will be no ranking points nor prize money awarded at that stop.

OVERALL

Each HMF/OC shall pay an annual sum of ten thousand United States dollars (US\$10,000) to World Aquatics no later than 30th November in each year prior to the event, which shall be put towards the overall annual prize money. A minimum amount of three hundred fifty thousand United States dollars (US\$350,000) shall be paid to the overall annual prize money.

- **"World Cup Leader"**. The overall individual annual winners will be decided by the male and female competitors respectively, who have accumulated the most points in the 10 km event during that year, provided that they have participated in a minimum of seventy-five per cent (75%) of the stops in that year.

The annual prize money to be awarded for both Men's and Women's World Cup overall winners (**World Cup Leader**) is as follows:

Position / Points	Prize Money
1st	US \$50,000
2nd	US \$35,000
3rd	US \$25,000
4th	US \$20,000
5th	US \$15,000
6th	US \$12,000

7th	US \$8,000
8th	US \$5,000
9th	US \$3,500
10th	US \$1,500

- **“World Cup Sprint Leader”:** US\$ 10,000 will be awarded to the overall individual annual leader (men & women) who have accumulated the most points in this category within the 10 km event during that year, provided that they have participated in a minimum of seventy-five per cent (75%) of the stops in that year.
- **“World Cup Junior Leader”:** US\$ 5,000 will be awarded to the overall individual annual leader (men & women) who have accumulated the most points in this category within the 10 km event during that year, provided that they have participated in a minimum of seventy-five per cent (75%) of the stops in that year.

NOTE:

- In case of a tie in the final overall rankings, tied positions will receive the prize money assigned for the rank position.
- Should any of the World Cup 2024 stops be cancelled, the 75% participation rule to be eligible for the overall annual prize money will be calculated over the total of stops that have taken place during the season.

5. TECHNICAL OFFICIALS & JUDGES

WORLD AQUATICS REPRESENTATIVES: For each stop, World Aquatics will nominate a Technical Delegate, Medical Representative, a Safety Delegate, and a Media Delegate.

TECHNICAL DELEGATE:

The Technical Delegate shall:

- Ensure that the World Aquatics OWS Rules & Regulations are applied and respected.
- Check the entries to ensure a coach is nominated for each competitor in accordance with the handler requirements.
- Meet with the HMF/OC at least three days prior to the event to ensure arrangements are in accordance with the Rules and Regulations.
- Confirm the Chief Referees for each event are current World Aquatics List Referees.
- Approve the officials' assignments proposed by the HMF and modify if required.
- Chair the Team Leaders Meeting, supported by the World Aquatics Sport Manager and the OC.
- Advise the athletes of the World Aquatics rules to be applied in case of presenting a protest (Competitions Regulations **Part One, Article 13.1**) and Jury of Appeal (Competitions Regulations **Part One, Article 13.2**).
- Check the presence of competitors and their coaches.
- Ensure that the information about the course, the safety and the finish is given in a clear and sufficient form.
- Ensure that the Chief Referees, the Safety Officer, the World Aquatics Medical Representative are also present.
- Submit a written report to World Aquatics within 96 hours of the end of the event, covering the administration and conduct of the event, including race information – participants, results, etc. -, the official hotels, meals and dining facilities, transportation, Venue and competition facilities, protocol, etc., according to contents specified by TOWSC Commission.

SAFETY DELEGATE: The Safety Delegate must review the safety plan submitted by the HMF/OC to World Aquatics to ensure that it is suitable for the conduct of the event and to make recommendations the HMF/OC to ensure the safe conduct of the event; and must:

- Chair the Safety Meeting.
- Meet with the HMF/OC at least three days prior to the event to ensure that the safety plan is in accordance with the Rules and Regulations.
- Ensure that enough qualified people are available onsite at the event to follow the race, as described in the Safety Plan.
- Ask for additional watercraft (kayaks jet-ski, paddle board etc.) if the numbers identified are deemed insufficient to provide a safe event.
- Ensure with the Safety Officer and the World Aquatics Medical Delegate that ambulances and medical people are ready near to the course.

MEDICAL REPRESENTATIVE: The duties of the Medical Representative shall include:

- Liaising with the World Aquatics Safety Delegate, World Aquatics Technical Delegate and Local Medical Officer (LMO) on all matters of athlete health and safety.
- Liaising with the LMO and World Aquatics Safety Officer to confirm the venue is acceptable for safe competition, considering such factors as water temperature and quality, aquatic flora and fauna, currents, boat traffic and any other potential hazards.
- Having responsibility for oversight of all medical aspects of competition, in liaison with the LMO. This includes adherence to medical regulations for World Aquatics events, as these specifically apply to Open Water Swimming.
- Undertaking oversight and approval of an emergency evacuation plan that coordinates on-water and land-based health care and includes emergency transport and hospital care.
- Providing oversight of the provision of adequate medical personnel, positioned appropriately at training venues and on the racecourse.
- Overseeing water quality and temperature results well prior to competition, and on competition day, in strict accordance with World Aquatic standards.
- Contributing to the medical presentation at the Team Leaders Meeting, in collaboration with the LMO.
- Submitting a detailed medical report on the event, together with recommendations for improvement at future World Aquatic competitions.

CHIEF REFEREES' APPOINTMENT: The HMF/OC of each event shall ensure that for each event race (men and women), a Chief Referee from the current World Aquatics Open Water Swimming Officials List is appointed and present for the race and the Team Leaders meeting.

TECHNICAL OFFICIALS: The HMF shall appoint the Technical Officials for each event for approval by World Aquatics/Technical Delegate, and all other officials, marshals and other persons required shall be recruited and appointed by the OC.

TECHNICAL OFFICIALS MEETING: The HMF shall organize an Open Water Swimming Officials meeting with the participation of all of the appointed officials, on the day prior to the race. This meeting will be conducted by the World Aquatics Technical Delegate.

6. VISAS & TRANSPORTATION

VISAS: The HMF/OC shall make best efforts with its government regarding entry visas for all competitors and team officials from any National World Aquatics Member Federation, as well as for World Aquatics officials and Media attending the event.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION: The HMF/OC shall welcome all entered competitors, team officials and World Aquatics Delegates and Officials at the nearest airport/railway station upon arrival and shall provide appropriate

transportation to the official hotels. The HMF shall also provide the return travel arrangements and confirm in advance the departure times from official hotels to the airport/railway station.

Flights for all athletes & team officials will be the responsibility of each National Federation to cover.

The HMF shall provide local transportation between official hotels and training/competition venues (shuttle system) free of charge for the following groups for the duration of the event and 4 days prior thereto, plus the day after the conclusion of the event:

- World Aquatics Officials: up 5 persons
- Judges and Officials
- Competitors and team officials

7. ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

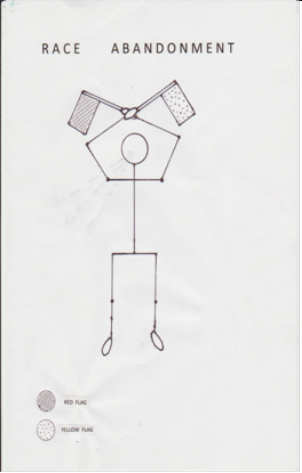


INVITED ATHLETES: The HMF/OC shall provide at its own cost accommodation in a minimum 4-star hotel with full-board (3 meals per day of adequate quantity and quality) up to 5 days for:

- The first three (3) men and the first three (3) women classified in the 10 km competitions at the World Aquatics Championships in Doha 2024.

Accommodation for the **rest of participants** (team officials & athletes) will be the responsibility of each National Federation to cover. Request for accommodation at the official hotel must be done by sending to the OC (by the specified deadline) the completed accommodation form - available at the World Aquatics Website.

APPENDIX 3 – COMPETITION DOCUMENTS

- REFEREE SIGNALS
- OPEN WATER SAFETY CHECK SHEET
- OPEN WATER SAFETY OFFICER SIGN-OFF FORM
- CHIEF REFEREE'S GENERIC BRIEFING
- CHIEF FINISH JUDGE FORM DETERMINED PLACING
- CHIEF TIMEKEEPER FORM DETERMINED PLACING
- TIMEKEEPERS & JUDGES FORM
- FEEDERS CARD
- INFRACTION REPORT / DSQ FORM
- PROTEST
- RECORDERS RESULT SHEET
- RELAY ORDER ENTRY SHEET
- TURN JUDGES FORM

ACTION	DESCRIPTION
	<p>RACE ABANDONMENT</p> <p>Continuous short whistle blasts or sets of 3x short air-horn blasts</p>
	<p>OUT OF TIME LIMIT</p> <p>Right arm horizontal at 90 degrees with left arm vertical to form T shape.</p>
	<p>INTERFERENCE/SEPARATION</p> <p>Part A: Arms extended Palms outward,</p> <p>Part B: Move arms apart horizontally to separate the pack of swimmers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Warning 1: 3 short blasts of the whistle 2) Warning 2: 3 short blasts of the whistle and athletes number shown

OPEN WATER SAFETY CHECK SHEET

Venue:

Date: / /

Time:am /pm

Car park, boat ramp, any possible obstructions in and out:

CONDITIONS	Ambient Temperature:	Water Temperature:
Time:		
Time:		
Time:		

Wind conditions:

Overall weather conditions: (to include expected/possible changes during event):

Tidal conditions:

High Tide:

Low Tide:

Swell conditions expected:

Minimum water depth on course:

Course Bottom Material:

Jelly fish:

Spotted -

Y/N

N/A

Expected -

Y/N

N/A

Products to treat available -

Y/N

N/A

Lifeguards:

Club:	# Qualified	# Unqualified

Radio Contact:

Radios – number:

Last charged:

Last checked:

Frequency channels – number:

Set at:

Emergency Channel:

Is radio contact available to Lifeguards, Coast Guard, Harbour Master etc. Y/N

Radios issued to:

Role	Who	Y/N	Channel
Chief Referee			
Referees			
Safety Officer			
Safety Staff			
Course officer			
Judges			
Medical Officer			
Others:			

Name of Emergency hospital:

.....

Address:

.....

.....

Location:

.....

appx. distance:

appx. travel time:

Telephone number:

Are emergency services aware of event: Y/N N/A

On site First Aid/Medical cover (or alternative arrangements):

.....

.....

Emergency transport available:

Any possible delay points: i.e., rush hour (to include works entrance/exit points)
schools/normal traffic situation/road works:

.....

.....

Any alternative routes/medical venues in emergency:

.....

.....

If private transport used is mobile phone available to driver: Y/N

Telephone number:

Mobile telephone number(s) of:

Role	Names	Ph Number
Referee(s):		
Safety Officer:		
Safety staff:		
Course Officer:		
Medical Officer		
Driver/s:		
Other(s):		

Number of Competitors:

	Senior Male:	Senior Female:	Junior Male:	Junior Female:
Entered:				
Reported				
Exit Water				

Medical Cover:

Doctor(s):

First Aid Organisation(s):

Officials:

Chief Referee(s):

Referee(s):

Safety Officer:

Course Officer:

Judges: Race

Turn

Finish

Chief Timekeeper(s):

Timekeepers:

Clerk(s) of Course:

Recorder(s):

Any other specific requirements or arrangements (to include anything pertaining to the public – carry forward to separate sheet if necessary but note on this form):

NOTE:

Event considered to be safe to go ahead (if no provide reasons): Y/N

.....

.....

Referee(s):

Safety Officer:

Course Officer:

Good Morning/ Afternoon

My name is and I am the Chief referee for this event. The other referees are,, and

Our Safety Officer is, supported by personnel from, (Name of the group providing on-course safety).

WORLD AQUATICS RULES & REGULATIONS apply to the conduct of this event.

The Water temperature is C The Air temperature is C

The forecast is for
.....

The Swimming Course of the race is as provided to you at the Teams Meeting. You are required to round the Turning buoys (give a brief description of the course). All other buoys are directional only. You are required to swim the complete course. The number of laps is

The Hazards on the course are

Your start will be in the water/ from the starting platform (delete as required) and you will require your accreditation to enter the water. When finishing you must enter and remain within the finish chute to finish the race including touching the vertical wall at the finish point.

The Time Limit for the race is minutes after the first competitor in each age/ gender(delete as required) finishes the race. If in the opinion of the Chief Referee you will not finish the race within the time limit you may be immediately asked to leave the water. If you receive a Red Flag disqualification you will also be required to immediately leave the water.

Should you experience any difficulties in the water, please raise one arm above your head, and remain stationary. Safety personnel will come to you as quickly as possible. If you leave the water for any reason, other than at the finish of the race it is mandatory that you report to the medical officer and to the Clerk of Course or Chief Recorder.

In the event of abandonment of the race the warning signal will be the starting signal sounded repeatedly. The referees & Safety personnel will also advise you to immediately leave the water.

The feeding platform/s is/are located at..... Only authorised persons are permitted on the feeding platform.

Your event will start in minutes. The Clerk of the Course will give you 1 minute warnings in the final 5 minutes leading up to the start. Have a good race and I wish you well with your swim today.

FEEDERS' CARD

COUNTRY NAME	
COUNTRY CODE	

WOMEN			
ATHLETE'S NAME	BIB N°	FEEDER'S NAME	CONTACT

MEN			
ATHLETE'S NAME	BIB N°	FEEDER'S NAME	CONTACT

Date:

Name and Signature:

Each participating competitor must be escorted/attended by his/her coach or another member of his/her delegation during the 10km.

EVENT NAME:		Date:	
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INFRACTION REPORT

EVENT:	<input type="radio"/> 5km	<input type="radio"/> 10km	Other:Km
GENDER:	<input type="radio"/> Men	<input type="radio"/> Women	<input type="radio"/> Team Event

 Men

 Women

Time:	Description:
<input type="radio"/> Red Card	Competitor's bib Number:
<input type="radio"/> Yellow Card	Competitor's Name:
<input type="radio"/> Withdrawal	Competitor's National Federation:
AQUA Competition Regulations applied:

Official's Name:

.....

Signature:

.....

Referee's Name:

.....

Signature:

.....

NATIONAL FEDERATION ADVISED:

Name & Position:	Signature:
Date & Time:.....	

PROTEST FORM

*Please complete all details in CAPITAL LETTERS.
To be submitted in accordance to World Aquatics Competition Regulations*

EVENT:	<input type="radio"/> 5km	<input type="radio"/> 10km	Other:Km
GENDER:	<input type="radio"/> Men	<input type="radio"/> Women	<input type="radio"/> Team Event

Competitor's bib Number:	
Competitor's Name:	
National Federation:	
Competitor's Representative (Name & Position)	Signature
Reason:	

OFFICIALS USE ONLY:

Date & Time received by Referee:	Referee's Signature:
Protest Deposit Received:\$	

REFEREE'S DECISION:

- Protest Upheld
 Protest Rejected

Decision Recorded Over Page

Reason (s)

Referee's Signature:

Date & Time:

REFEREE'S DECISION:

Decision Accepted :

 YES NO

Referred to Jury of Appeal:

 YES NOName of person receiving decision:
(Competitor/Team Official / Competitor's representative)

Signature:

Jury of Appeal Decision:

Jury of Appeal Signature:

Date & Time:

**4x1500m MIXED TEAM RELAY
RELAY ORDER ENTRY SHEET**
Please complete using CAPITAL LETTERS.

NATIONAL FEDERATION'S NAME

Country Code:

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Order	FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	Date of Birth	GENDER MALE (M)/ FEMALE (F)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Team Coach Name:

 Official Representative presenting the Form:
 (Team Coach / Official Representative)

Name:

Signature:

Name:

Signature:

