

GUIDELINES FOR RUNNING SWIM MEETS



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INTRODUCTION

Swimming Victoria's Technical Committee has developed the following guidelines to assist swimming event organisers across Victoria. These guidelines will assist the various parties to understand their respective roles and responsibilities to ensure that meets are run safely, competently & in accordance with the Rules for Competition as stated by the Swimming Victoria By-Laws.

RECORD KEEPING

Due to the turnover of willing and experienced club volunteers, Swimming Victoria recommends that clubs & other swimming entities create and continuously update their own written record of the organisational process required to conduct a swim meet. This document can then be used by the organisation as a reference resource to provide continuity and guidance for future years.

SWIMMING VICTORIA APPROVED MEETS

Swimming Victoria understands that clubs organise and hold swim meets for the purposes of providing competition & for necessary fund-raising. To ensure a swim meet is considered by Swimming Victoria for approval and/or as a Qualifying Meet, there are specific requirements which must be complied with. These are listed on the Swimming Victoria website (www.swimmingvictoria.org.au) under the heading: "Competitions → Meet Approvals.."

As detailed on the above webpage, all Swimming Victoria Approved Meets must have a minimum number of Officials accredited under the Swimming Australia (SAL) National Officiating

Program (NOP). It is important to note that the number of Officials required for the meet to be approved is a *minimum*, and Clubs are encouraged to fulfil as many roles as they can with qualified Officials to reduce workloads and pressure on a small number of individuals. This is particularly important when sessions for a meet are anticipated to run for a number of hours, as the workload on individual officials can be quite high.

Unqualified club volunteers should always be encouraged to shadow qualified Officials at any available opportunity, to facilitate training for potential future accreditation.

It is also recommended that Clubs plan for and allow for last minute unavailability of officials due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness, car breakdowns etc).

KEY POSITIONS FOR EVENTS: MEET DIRECTOR AND REFEREE IN CHARGE

In most instances of club-run meets, we end up with two people carrying out separate but mutually dependent functions. These are the Meet Director (MD) who is usually an officer of the club concerned and the Referee in Charge (RIC), who is a Technical Official. These people need to work well together on the day of the meet as the MD is responsible for the organisation of the meet and the RIC is responsible for the running of the actual competition on the day.

On the day of the meet, the MD should come prepared to deal with any entry queries.

OFFICIALS AT EVENTS

The RIC and all other Technical Officials gain their qualifications through a combination of practical experience and a formal theory process set by Swimming Australia entitled- ‘The National Officiating Accreditation Program’ (NOP). All Technical Officials other than Timekeepers must have a current Victorian Working with Children Check.

When calling for officials for your meet, you should provide as much detail as you can such as location, estimated start & finish times of each session and if possible, a copy of the meet flyer.

Clubs can expect that Swimming Victoria qualified Technical Officials will be competent in their respective roles and can be trusted to run the actual competition on the day but should remember:

- All Swimming Victoria Officials are volunteers and expect to be treated courteously;
- Officials and volunteers have commitments outside of swimming & require a reasonable amount of notice to attend a meet;
- Officials and volunteers should be offered refreshments whilst on the job;
- Swimming Victoria Officials will require assistance from people within the host club for the duration of the meet in roles such as: announcers, marshals (sometimes known as “clerks of course”), check-starters, runners, event-board managers and timekeepers (3 for each lane);
- It is always helpful if at least one Swimming Victoria qualified marshal is in attendance in addition to club volunteer marshals on the day of an event;

- It is a good idea to stick a copy of the program, page by page at a suitable height on the wall outside the marshalling room. This enables swimmers to recheck their event details prior to entry to the room;
- The “Technical Officials Manual”, a comprehensive resource which gives details of the duties applicable to the various types of officials is available on the Swimming Victoria website.
- In some cases Swimming Victoria Officials and Volunteers will be unable to officiate at a swim meet for a whole day and where appropriate should be given the option of attending for a half day.

Swimming Victoria Officials require room to work on the pool-deck in order to carry out their duties without distraction or interference. Club officials should ensure that coaches, swimmers & spectators are excluded from their pool-deck working area and should enforce that exclusion throughout the meet.

ROSTERS AND VOLUNTEERS

When the MD has organised the necessary number of Technical Officials for the meet, the MD should nominate & notify by email or phone, a suitably qualified RIC from their ranks for the day.

The MD & RIC can then jointly draw up a proposed roster of officials and their roles for the meet (including club volunteers) and should forward a copy to all those who are named therein. The roster should also provide a mobile telephone contact number for the MD for the day of the meet.

Clubs are responsible for the organisation of the warm-up/cool-down areas and must ensure that dive lanes are well supervised at all times.

Pool-depth/dive guidelines must be observed.

A warm-up supervisor must be appointed for your meet and this person should liaise with and seek assistance from the coaches attending the meet.

IDENTIFICATION OF VOLUNTEERS

It is **strongly** recommended that club volunteers wear Club T-shirts or similar uniform items and that all club volunteers wear name badges. The RIC should be given the opportunity to meet the “Club appointed officials” prior to the start of the meet in order to pass on specific instructions e.g. to the marshals regarding disqualification of swimmers who fail to report by the appointed time and regarding possible combination or re-seeding of events.

TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS

Swimming Victoria recommend that clubs hold information sessions for their volunteers prior to the meet to provide them with training in basic procedures applicable to their roles and responsibilities. District Referees should be contacted if assistance is required for these sessions.

Clubs are invited to nominate members and senior swimmers to accompany qualified Swimming Victoria officials on the pool deck during sessions in order that they may gain an understanding of the role of a working official. Swimming Victoria hope that this may encourage more members of the swimming community to become active officials

ANNOUNCER

It is very important that a competent announcer be appointed for the meet. A practical script for announcers is included in the “Technical Officials Manual”. It is important for the Announcer to remain impartial throughout the course of the meet.

The announcer should conduct a sound check prior to the start of the meet. Additionally, appropriate music may be played during warm-up and during events of 400m distance or more. However, music volume should be set at a level that doesn’t interfere with the ability of coaches to communicate with swimmers or for spectators to converse with each other.

The announcer should also ensure Technical Officials & volunteers working at the meet are thanked for their services and should encourage all those attending to adhere to the Swimming Australia Behavioural Guidelines Policy.

EQUIPMENT

To ensure the running of an efficient swim meet, meet organisers need to ensure where either the Automatic Officiating Equipment (AOE) system at the Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre (MSAC) or a District Semi-Automatic Timing (SAT) system is to be used, that experienced operators are on hand to deal with any troubleshooting which may be required. Swimming Victoria can supply contact details for suitably experienced “Go To” Technical Officials willing to assist clubs with both timing systems and with “Meet Manager” software matters.

When 800m and 1500m events are on your organisation’s program, you must ensure that lap-counters are available for each lane in use and that club volunteers are rostered and briefed on the rules for turning the lap-counters.

LANES AT EVENTS

Where fewer lanes are used than are actually available at the pool, as is often the case with school meets where perhaps 6 lanes are used in a 10 lane pool, the lanes to be used are the lanes from the middle out to the sides. This is achieved by using lanes in the following sequence: Lanes 4, 5,3,6,2, & 7, thus lanes 0, 1, 8 & 9 will be vacant. This enables the judges of stroke on each side of the pool to have responsibility for and vision of an equal number of lanes and from an equal distance.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Prior to the commencement of the meet and at the conclusion of each session (for a multi session meet), the MD & the RIC should jointly undertake a risk inspection of the pool and the surrounding area to ensure that the venue is safe for the running of the meet. Any faults or defects found should be reported to the responsible authorities immediately to ensure prompt rectification.

Organisers Must have a copy of their Club’s current certificate of insurance on hand on the day of the meet. Any queries regarding club’s insurance requirements should be directed to

Swimming Victoria's Brokers, JLT insurance, whose details are available from the Swimming Victoria Website. A "Risk Assessment" check-list is available to assist club organisers.

EVENT ENTRIES

Clubs should set entry limits for their meets and should reserve the right to set a cut-off point in the number of heats per event as well as setting realistic qualifying times for entries.

If on-line entries were accepted, the club must have a laptop computer with internet access available at the meet.

Multi-Class Swimmers: (Swimmers with a Disability)

If your program includes "Multi-Class" events, the MD will require either a copy of the current Multi Class Point Score (MCPS) spread-sheet or access to the online MCPS calculator to work out the adjusted final positions. http://www.swimming.org.au/article.php?group_id=6683

A requirement exists for all Multi-Class Swimmers competing to display their classification cards to the Technical Director or Referee in Charge **PRIOR** to the first swim of the day. This is required once only at the start of the meet or event. This applies to all club meets not Swimming Victoria Meets.

Due to ongoing difficulties encountered by Swimming Australia Ltd (SAL) in producing updated classification cards, the following procedures have now been instituted in order to provide certainty and clarity to those affected:

The Swimming Victoria Office will send a document detailing their current classification and exemptions for MC swimmers who have not received an updated letter and card from SAL.

The SAL MC Classification master list is updated regularly and available here: <http://www.swimming.org.au/multi-class-swimming.html>. This link will also be on the Swimming Victoria website.

Clubs running meets in which they have included events for MC Swimmers and/or where MC swimmers have entered events are advised to download a current copy of the SAL Multi Class Classification List and to have that list on hand on the day of the meet.

MC swimmers competing at Club meets must present either their card or their Swimming Victoria document to the Referee in Charge of that meet **prior to their first swim on the day**. When the MC Swimmer shows their classification card the Referee will note the Exceptions relevant to that swimmer

MC swimmers competing at State Championship Events do not have to present their cards or their Swimming Victoria Documents to either the Technical Director or the Referee in Charge.

In the event that an MC swimmer's card shows that the swimmer is hearing impaired or that the swimmer requires assistance of any kind, this should be discussed with the Technical Director or the Referee in Charge (as appropriate) on the day.

No exemptions will be allowed for MC swimmers who fail to display their cards as required.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES & TAPING

All competitors, parents & coaches need to be aware that Swimming Victoria (SV) enforces the FINA RULE relating to Medical Taping:

Rule SW10.8 provides that any sort of tape on the body is subject to approval of the Sport Medicine Committee. SV is implementing this rule in modified form in that we require a certificate from a medical professional (doctor, physio etc.) specifying why the taping is required. The certificate must be presented to the Technical Director or where appropriate, the Referee in Charge BEFORE the swimmer wearing the tape begins competing at that meet. It need only be presented once for the duration of the meet.

The certificate must be dated and will be accepted by SV for 30 days from the date of issue. The certificate should state that the swimmer is fit to swim and that the taping does not provide any competitive advantage to the swimmer. The TD or Referee in Charge will check that in their view, the taping doesn't provide any advantage to the competitor.

TIME SCHEDULING OF EVENT

Meet organisers should ensure that the swim meet is run to a reasonable timeline with sessions not exceeding 3.5 hours duration and allow for adequate breaks. Host clubs should advertise that sessions "Will Not Start Before XXXX" thus allowing themselves some spare time in the event that earlier sessions run over time due to technical malfunctions.

Time should also be allowed for clearing the pool for Multi Class events (see prior)

Time-lines should be constructed progressively as entries are received to ensure that the time guidelines are not exceeded for meets. These should allow 40 seconds between backstroke heats, 25 seconds between other heats and a "time reserve" for unforeseen glitches, equipment failure etc. We recommend that adequate time is allowed for medal presentations to be conducted in such a way as to publicly recognise the achievements of the athletes.

In the event that you publish a "timeline" for your meet, you must state that "the timeline is a guide only" and that it must not be relied on as the start time for particular events.

Event start times may change significantly due to heat combinations or other variables.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Clubs intending to authorise photographers to operate at their meets should establish clear guidelines for their activities and should clear these with the RIC operating on the day.

It is recommended that the host club's Meet Director liaises directly with the swim meet venue management prior to the event, as management may have specific requirements or restrictions regarding photographers. The centre may also already have a contract or similar arrangement with a photographic organisation.