

## APPENDIX A – OPEN WATER SWIMMING

### A. OFFICIALS

The following is intended to give guidance to Event Officials on the interpretation and manner of execution of the Event Rules. The following minimum officials are required at Open Water Swimming events:

- A Chief Referee (one per race)
- Referees
- Chief Judge
- Chief Timekeeper plus 2 Timekeepers
- Chief Finish Judge plus 2 Finish Judges
- Race Safety Officer
- Medical Officer
- Course Officer
- Clerk of the Course
- Turn Judges (one per alteration of Course)
- Starter
- Announcer
- Recorder
- Officials to be renamed as above thereafter

#### A.1. The Chief Referee

The Referee shall:

- A.1.1 Have full control and authority over all officials. At least 45 minutes before the start of the event, he shall approve officials' assignments and instruct them regarding all special features or regulation related to the competition. He shall enforce all Rules and decisions of FINA and SSA and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by these Rules (OWS 3.1)
- A.1.2 Have authority to intervene in the competition at any stage to ensure that FINA and SSA Rules are observed (OWS 3.2)
  - A.1.2.1 In case of hazardous conditions that jeopardize the safety of the swimmers and the officials, in conjunction with all Referees and the Safety Officer he can stop the race. (OWS 3.2.1)
- A.1.3 Adjudicate on all protests related to the competition in progress (OWS 3.3)
- A.1.4 Give a decision in cases where the Judges' decision and times recorded do not agree (OWS 3.4)
- A.1.5 Signal to swimmers, 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 (OWS 3.5).
- A.1.6 Disqualify any swimmer for any violation of the Rules that he personally observes or which are reported to him by other Authorised Officials (OWS 3.6)
- A.1.7 Ensure that all necessary officials are at their respective posts for the conduct of the competition. He may appoint substitutes for any who are absent, incapable of acting or found to be inefficient. He may appoint additional officials if considered necessary. (OWS 3.8)
- A.1.8 Receive all reports prior to the start of the race from the Clerk of the Course, Course Officer and Safety Officer. (OWS 3.8)

#### A.2 Referees

The Referees shall:

- A.2.1 Have authority to intervene in competition at any stage to ensure that FINA Rules are observed. (OWS 3.9)
- A.2.2 Disqualify any swimmer for any violation of the Rules that he personally observes. (OWS 3.10)

#### A.3 The Starter

The Starter shall:

- A.3.1 Start the race in accordance to OWS 4 following the signal by the Chief Referee (OWS 3.11).

#### A.4 The Chief Timekeeper

The Chief Timekeeper shall:

- A.4.1 Assign at least a further 2 Timekeepers to their positions for the start and finish (OWS 3.12)
- A.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 (OWS 3.13)

- A.4.3 Collect from each Timekeeper a card showing the time recorded for each swimmer, and if necessary, inspect their watches (OWS 3.14).
- A.4.4 Submit all time cards to the Referee for ratification and submission the Recording Officer.

### **A.5 The Timekeepers**

The Timekeepers shall:

- A.6.1 Take the time of each swimmer assigned. The watches shall be certified correct to the satisfaction of the Management Committee (OWS 3.16).
- A.6.2 Start their watches at the starting signal, and only stop their watches when instructed by the Chief Timekeeper (OWS 3.17).
- A.6.3 Promptly after each finish, record the time on the time card and turn it over to the Chief Timekeeper (OWS 3.18).

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

### **A.7 The Chief Judge**

The Chief Judge shall:

- A.7.1 Assign each Judge to a position (OWS 3.19).
- A.7.2 Record and communicate any decision received from the Referees during the competition (OWS 3.20).
- A.7.3 Collect after the race, signed results sheets from each Judge and establish the result and placing which shall be submitted to the Referee, for ratification and submission to the Recording Officer

### **A.8 Finish Judges**

The Finish Judges (three) shall:

- A.8.1 Be positioned in line with the finish where they shall at all times have a clear view of the finish (OWS 3.22).
- A.8.2 Record after each finish the placing of the swimmers according to the assignment given (OWS 3.23).

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

### **A.9 The Race Judges**

Shall be appointed for extreme races/conditions and will be assigned to escort craft.

### **A.10 The Turn Judges**

The Turn Judges shall:

- A.10.1 Be positioned so as to ensure all swimmers execute the alterations in course as indicated in the competition information documents and as given at the pre-race briefing (OWS 3.28).
- A.10.2 Record any infringements of the turn procedures on the record sheets provided and indicate the infringement to the Race Judge at the time of infringement by blasts on a whistle (OWS 3.30).
- A.10.3 Promptly upon completion of the event deliver the signed record sheet to the Chief Judge (OWS 3.31).
- A.10.4 In addition, could be appointed by the Referee to assist the Safety Officer, by advising the numbers of swimmers passing each alteration-of-course.

### **A.11 The Race Safety Officer**

The Race Safety Officer shall:

- A.11.1 Be responsible to the Referee for all aspects of safety related to the conduct of the competition (OWS 3.31).
- A.11.2 Check that the entire course, with special regard to the start and finish areas, is safe, suitable, and free of any obstruction (OWS 3.32).
- A.11.3 Be responsible for ensuring that sufficient powered safety craft are available during the competition so as to provide full safety backup to the escort patrollers (OWS 3.33)
- A.11.4 Prior to the competitions provide to all swimmers full details of course conditions, and where applicable, tides/currents.
- A.11.5 In conjunction with the Medical Officer, advise the 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 (OWS 3.35).
- 5.11.6 In conjunction with the Medical Officer, provide a safe warm-up area for swimmers.

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

- A.11.7 Co-ordinates with the Course Officer on all aspects of the course and be satisfied that the course is safe for the conduct of the Championship.
- A.11.8 Checks with the Course Officer that suitable warnings of the Event have been passed to all other craft using, or likely to use, any portion of the course.
- A.11.9 Advises all swimmers and officials of any safety hazards and actions to be taken, if necessary.
- A.11.10 Prior to the start, checks evacuation procedures and sites of Medical Teams.
- A.11.11 Media boats to be checked if used, and advised of no-go and safe areas. The Safety Officer in consultation with the Referee, has authority remove boats from the event.
- A.11.11 30 minutes prior to the start confirms to the Referee that, in their opinion, all safety requirements have been met.
- A.11.12 Inspect the swimmers' escort craft (where applicable) 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.
  - A.11.12.1 The boat should be of sufficient size to be able to contain the crew, the Race Judge (if used) and a Swimmer's representative.
  - A.11.12.2 During any Event over 10km the swimmer will need to receive refreshment at regular intervals therefore it is essential that the Swimmer's Representative can get close enough to transfer the required refreshment without impairment or delay to the swimmer.
  - A.11.12.3 If propulsion of the escort boat is achieved by human effort, it must be remembered that the swimmers will be travelling at up to 4km and if there would be a head wind during the event, staying with the swimmer could be very difficult.
  - A.11.12.4 When an escort boat with mechanical propulsion is used, the following points should be considered:
    - i. Exhaust fumes. Vertical or inboard exhausts present little problem; However, waterline exhausts can cause severe problems for the swimmer.
    - ii. 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 and being aware at all swimmers' safety.
    - iii. Toilet arrangements. Consideration should be given to the personal requirements of those persons who may be in the boat for extended periods.
- A.11.13 Canoes/surfboards can be of use as close-in escort in open stretches of rough water but must always be backed up by a suitable larger craft.

## **A.12 The Medical Officer (Senior Para-Medic)**

The Medical Officer shall:

- A.12.1 be responsible to the Referee for all medical aspects related to the competition and swimmers (OWS 3.36)
- A.12.2 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 (OWS 3.37)
- A.12.3 In conjunction with the Safety Officer, advise the 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 (OWS 3.38).

In addition to the Rules:

- A.12.4 The Medical Officer is responsible to the Organising Committee for the provision of adequate protection from the elements, to ensure the well-being of all swimmers and provide such facilities as are required under the rules and recommendations of FINA. During the actual event the Medical Officer's primary responsibility is to the Referee and will also act in conjunction with, and liaise with, the Safety Officer.

The Medical Officer's duties shall include:

- A.12.5 Checking that the water quality for the designated course is safe and suitable for staging the event and to confirm that there are no other factors (such as shark, crocodile or jellyfish) which would render the venue undesirable.
- A.12.6 Provision for final physical examination of all swimmers prior to the event. Any swimmer who is, in the opinion of the Medical Officer, medically unfit to take part shall be reported to the Referee and Organising Committee.
- A.12.7 To compile such data on the status of the swimmers as may be required by SSA.

- A.12.8 Provide for officials, boat crews and swimmers' representatives, an explanation of the race medical plan. This plan should include swimmer recovery/casualty evacuation procedures.
- A.12.9 Provide for Medical/First Aid/Paramedic Teams a detailed explanation of the medical plan together with relevant procedures required for its activation.
- A.12.10 Ensure that all swimmers, at the time of finishing or in the case of withdrawal, are not requiring further medical supervision at the point of landing .
- A.12.11 Providing advice and assistance regarding suitable intake of refreshment or sustenance to aid recovery from the event.
- A.12.12 Submit 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.
- A.12.13 The Medical Officer shall also provide a Medical Plan to the Event Organisers.
- A.12.14 The detailed medical plan for any given event will be unique when the vast ranges of variables are taken into consideration, especially the variations in temperatures and climatic conditions.

The medical plan should include but not be limited to the following:

- A.12.15 Sufficient personnel and equipment to execute the plan.
- A.12.16 A timetable and personnel roster for the pre-race inspection of all swimmers.
- A.12.17 A main medical receiving site at which there should be sufficient medical equipment and trained personnel to ensure the basic medical needs of a swimmer until onward transportation or evacuation can be accomplished.
- A.12.18 Detailed plan for onward evacuation of serious urgent medical cases to prepared designated hospitals or medical centres.
- A.12.19 Sufficient means of communication to establish and maintain contact between the Medical Officer and their Medical Teams.
- A.12.20 Detailed planning for the treatment of either hypothermic or hyperthermic symptoms.
- A.12.21 Details of the provisions made to supply the equipment and personnel required to conform to the rules and recommendations regarding the testing of swimmers for banned substances, where applicable.
- A.12.22 Sufficient land, water and (if possible) airborne transportation to ensure the rapid movement of any casualties from the water or escort boat to a medical team/facility.

### **A.13 The Course Officer**

The Course Officer shall:

- A.13.1 Be responsible to the Event Organisers for the correct survey of the course (OWS 3.39).
- A.13.2 Ensure that start and finish areas are correctly marked and all equipment has been correctly installed and, where applicable, is in working order (OWS 3.40).
- A.13.3 Ensure all course alteration points are correctly marked and manned prior to the commencement of the competition (OWS 3.41).
- A.13.4 With the Referee, Safety Officer/LOIC member and a Coach inspect the course and markings prior to the commencement of the competition (OWS 3.42). At the same time, water temperature to be taken in the centre of the course, at a depth of 40cm. Temperature should be a minimum of 16° and a maximum of 31°.
- A.13.5 ensure that Turn Judges are in position prior to the start of the competition and report this to the Referees (OWS 3.43)

Some additional points:

- A.13.6 Prior to the first (where applicable) briefing meeting that all aspects of the course are such as to conform to the initial safety clearance given at time of application.
- A.13.7 Ensure prior to the first briefing that no obstructions exist on the course other than those already allowed for.
- A.13.8 Confer with, and keep fully briefed, the Safety Officer.
- A.13.9 At the briefing meeting ensure that large scale maps of the course, clearly showing start, finish and all turns, are available for swimmers representatives, Race Judges (where used), all Officials and the media.
- A.13.10 Brief all Turn Judges and allocate positions, ensuring sufficient markers and flags are available.
- A.13.11 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 swimmer has passed their post.

### **A.14 Clerk of the Course**

The Clerk of the Course shall:

- A.14.1 Ensure proper reception facilities at the start/finish for all swimmers.

- A.14.2 Be certain all competitors are present in the assembly area, at the required time prior to the start (OWS 3.46). and ensure all swimmers have trimmed fingernails and are not wearing any jewellery.
- A.14.3 The Clerk of the Course shall ensure that swimmers and escort craft (if used) are properly identified by number. The number assigned will be selected depending on entry method used (the number allocated will also indicate the number of the escort craft where used), And start line position when starting from a fixed platform. At an event where race-day entries are not allowed, all swimmers' numbers will be selected no later than the day previous to the competition.
- A.14.4 Brief or arrange to brief all swimmers (and escorts if applicable) on course and safety matters.
- A.14.5 Keep swimmers and Officials informed of the time remaining before the start at suitable intervals until the last 5 minutes, during which one minute warnings shall be given (OWS 3.47).
- A.14.6 Ensure that swimmers representatives are correctly identified and registered, and that feeding poles are checked to comply with FINA rules, plus for sharp ends, which must be covered.
- A.14.7 Ensure that the swimmers representatives are made aware of the exact location of the escort boat and/or feeding pontoon plus the arrangements for getting into that boat/or onto the feeding pontoon, immediately prior to the start.
- A.14.8 Ensure that all swimmers are taken from their preparation area into the start area at the appropriate time and that clearly marked containers are available for any equipment not going on the boat, which, after the start will be transported and stored at the finish area.
- A.14.9 After consulting with the Starter have escorts take positions, and assist the Starter in lining up swimmers
- A.14.10 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 the time (OWS 3.49).
- A.14.11 Ensure that finishers are re-united with their representative and escorted away to the showers/changing facilities or to the media interview positions.

#### **A.15 RECORDER**

The Recorder Shall:

- A.15.1 Record violations/infringements with relevant rules, and times thereof, as reported by the relevant official to the Referee, during the event.
- A.15.2 Enter results as per official signed forms, and maintain record for team awards as appropriate.
- A.15.3 In consultation with the referee, publish results for award ceremonies.

#### **A.16 The Announcer**

The Announcer shall:

- A.16.1 Welcome swimmers and spectators.
- A.16.2 Introduce them to Open Water Swimming.
- A.16.3 Introduce Principals: Race Officials, Organisers, Sponsors, Elected Officials, etc.
- A.16.4 Describe the course, the event, when to start day's other events, conditions.
- A.16.5 Explain safety measures:
  - A.16.5.1 head count,
  - A.16.5.2 paddlers,
  - A.16.5.3 escorts,
  - A.16.5.4 lifeguards,
  - A.16.5.5 doctor,
  - A.16.5.6 Retirement procedures.
    - A.16.6.1 International Swimmers,
    - A.16.6.2 National Record Holders etc.
  - A.16.6.3 Keep an eye on the finish area and announce accordingly
  - A.16.6.4 Announce results and advise where they are posted.

#### **A.17 Race commentary**

If live broadcast commentary from an escort craft is possible, the commentator should have knowledge of open water swimming but may not be an on-duty race official. If direct broadcast from the escort craft is not possible, the commentator must liaise with the announcer.