

APPENDIX B

FINA and SSA RULES CONCERNING VENUE, START, RACE AND TEAM EVENTS (OWS 5.1-5.10)

B.1 The Venue

- B.1.1 SSA Sanctioned open water swimming events will distances of 1000m and over, conducted at a venue and course approved by the relevant affiliate.
- B.1.2 The course shall be in water that is subject to only minor currents or tide and may be salt or fresh water.
- B.1.3 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, and must comply with DWAF recommendation for recreational use.
- B.1.4 The minimum depth of water at any point on the course shall be 1.40 metre.
- B.1.5 The water temperature should be a minimum of 16 degrees Celsius and a maximum of 31 degrees. It should be checked the day of the race, 2 hours before the start, in the middle of the course at a depth of 40cm. this control should be done in the presence of a Commission made up of the following persons present:
 - B.1.5.1 a Referee
 - B.1.5.2 a member of the Organising Committee/Safety Officer.
- B.1.6 All turns/alterations of course shall be clearly indicated.
- B.1.7 A clearly marked craft or platform, containing a Turn Judge, shall be positioned at all alternatives of course in such a manner as not to obstruct a swimmer's visibility of the turn.
- B.1.8 All Feeding Platforms, turning apparatus and Turn Judges' craft/platform shall be securely fixed in position and not be subject to tidal, wind or other movements.
- B.1.0 The final approach to the finish shall be clearly defined with markers of a distinctive colour.
- B.1.10 The finish shall be clearly defined and preferably marked by a vertical face.

B.2 The Start (OWS 4.1-4.10)

- B.2.1 All Open Water competitions of 3km and over shall start with all swimmers standing on a fixed platform or in water with depth sufficient for them to commence swimming on the start signal.
 - B.2.1.1 When starting from a fixed platform, competitors shall be assigned a position on the platform, as determined by random draw.
- B.2.2 The Clerk of the Course shall keep swimmers and officials informed of the time before start at suitable intervals and at one minute intervals for the last 5 minutes.
- 6.2.3 When the numbers of entries dictate it, the start may be segregated in the Men's and Ladies' competitions.
- B.2.4 The start line shall be clearly defined by either overhead apparatus or by removable equipment at water level.
- B.2.5 The 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.
- B.2.6 The Starter shall be positioned so as to be clearly visible to all swimmers.
 - B.2.6.1 On the starter command "take your marks" they shall take up a starting position with at least one foot at the front of the platform.
 - B.2.6.2 The starter will give the starting signal when he considers all swimmers are ready.
- B.2.7 The start signal shall be both audible and visual.
- B.2.8 If in the opinion of the Referee, unfair advantage has been gained at the start, the offending competitor will be given a yellow or red flag in accordance with OWS 6.3.
- B.2.9 All escort safety craft shall be stationed prior to the start so as not to interfere with any swimmer, and if picking up their swimmer from behind, shall navigate in such a way as not to manoeuvre through the field of swimmers.
- B.2.10 Although they may start together, in all other respects the men's and ladies' competitions shall be treated as separate events.

B.3 The Race (OWS 6.1-6.17)

- B.3.1 All Open Water Competitions shall be Freestyle events.
- B.3.2 Referees/Race Judges shall instruct any swimmer who is, in their opinion, taking unfair advantage by pace or slip streaming with the escort craft to move clear.
- B.3.3 **Disqualification Procedure (for 3km and over)**

- B.3.3.1 If in the Opinion of the Chief referee or Referees, any swimmer, or swimmer's representative, or escort safety craft, takes advantage by committing any violation of the rules or by making intentional contact with any swimmer, the following proceeding shall apply:
- B.3.3.2 1st infringement:
A yellow flag and a card bearing the swimmer's number shall be raised to indicate and to inform the swimmer that he/she is in violation of the rules
- B.3.3.3 2nd Infringement:
A red flag and a card bearing the swimmer's numbers shall be raised by the Referee (OWS 3.6) to indicate and to inform the swimmers that he/she is for the second time in violation of the rules. The swimmers shall be disqualified. He/she must leave the water immediately and be placed in an escort craft, and take no further part in the race.
- B.3.4 If in the opinion of a Referee, an action of a swimmer or an escort safety craft, or a swimmer's approved representative is deemed 'unsporting', the referee shall disqualify the swimmer concerned immediately
- B.3.5 Escort safety craft shall manoeuvre so as not to obstruct or place themselves directly ahead of any swimmer and not take unfair advantage by pacing or slip streaming.
- B.3.6 Escort safety craft shall attempt to maintain a constant position so as to station the swimmer at, or forward of, the midpoint of the boat.
- B.3.7 Standing on the bottom during a race shall not disqualify a swimmer but they may not walk or jump.
- B.3.8 With the exception of OWS 6.6, as mentioned above, swimmers shall not receive support from any fixed or floating object and shall not intentionally touch or be touched by their escort craft or crew therein.
- B.3.8.1 Rendering assistance by an official medical officer to a swimmer in apparent distress should always supersede official rules of disqualification through "intentional contact" with a swimmer (OWS 3.1)
- B.3.9 Each escort boat shall contain a Race Judge, a person of the swimmer's choice, and the minimum crew required to operate the escort safety craft.
- B.3.10 No swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device that may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy. Goggles, a maximum of two (2) caps, nose clip and earplugs may be used.
- B.3.11 Swimmers shall be allowed to use grease or other such substances providing these are not, in the opinion of the Referee, excessive.
- B.3.12 The pacing of a swimmer by another person entering the water is not permitted.
- B.3.13 Coaching and the giving of instructions by the approved swimmer's representative on the feeding platform or in the escort craft are permitted. No whistle shall be allowed. Feeding poles are not to exceed 5m in length when extended. Any sharp areas must be covered over. No objects, rope or wire may hang off the end of the 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 20cm.
- B.3.14 When taking sustenance swimmers may use Rule OWS 6.6 provided Rule OWS 6.7 is not infringed.
- B.3.15 All swimmers shall have their competition number clearly displayed in waterproof ink on their upper back, arms and hands.
- B.3.16 Each escort safety craft shall display the swimmer's competition number so as to be easily seen from either side of the escort safety craft, and the national flag of the swimmer's Federation.
- B.3.17 In all events, time limits shall apply as follows from the finish time of the first swimmers:

Events under 25km	-	30 minutes
Events of 25km	-	60 minutes
Events over 25km	-	120 minutes

Decision at the discretion of the referee.
- B.3.18 Competitors who do not finish the course within the time limits shall be removed from the water except that the referee may allow a competitor outside the time limit to complete the course but not participate in any points or prizes awarded.
- B.3.19 Emergency Abandonment
- B.3.19.1 In cases of emergency abandonment of races of 10km or less, the race will be restarted from the beginning at the earliest possible moment.
- B.3.19.2 In cases of emergency abandonment for races of longer than 10km, where the lead swimmer has accomplished at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the race, the final ranking will be as reported by the Chief Referee. If the lead swimmer has not competed $\frac{3}{4}$ of the race, it will be restarted from the beginning at the earliest moment possible

B.4 The Finish of The Race (OWS 7.1-7.7)

- B.4.1 The area leading to the finish apparatus should be clearly marked by rows of buoys that narrow as they get closer to the finish wall. Escort Safety crafts should be stationed at the approach to and entrance of the finish lane to ensure that only the boats authorised to do so enter or cross this entrance.
- B.4.2 In events of 3km and over, the finish apparatus should, where possible, be a vertical wall at least 5m wide fixed if necessary to flotation devices, securely fastened in place so as not to be moved by wind, tide or the force of a swimmer striking the wall. The finish should be filmed and recorded by video system with slow motion and recall facilities including timing equipment.
- B.4.2.1 When automatic Officiating Equipment is used for timing of competitions in accordance with rule SW 11, microchip transponder technology capable of providing split times is mandatory and should be added to the Equipment. Use of microchip transponder technology is mandatory for competitions at the World Championships and Olympic Games. Microchip transponder timing technology will be recorded officially in tenths of seconds. The final places will be determined by the referee based upon the finish judges' report and the finish video tape.
- B.4.2.2 It is mandatory for all swimmers to wear a microchip transponder on each wrist throughout the race. If a swimmer loses a transponder the Race Judge or other authorised Official, will immediately inform the Referee who will instruct the responsible Official on the water to issue a replacement transponder. Any swimmer who finishes the race without a transponder will be disqualified.
- B.4.3 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.
- B.4.4 Every effort should be made to ensure that the swimmer's representative can get from the escort boat to meet the swimmer as they leave the water.
- B.4.5 Upon leaving the water some swimmers may require assistance. Swimmers should only be touched or handled if they clearly display a need, or ask for assistance.
- B.4.6 A member of the Medical Team should inspect the swimmers as they leave the water. A chair, in which the swimmer can sit while an assessment is made, should be provided.
- B.4.7 Once cleared by the Medical Member, swimmers should be given access to refreshment.

B.5 Team Events (FINA BL 9.3.7.5)

- B.5.2 Team events can be contested over the 1km 3km or 5km? distance
- B.5.3 Teams will consist of three (3) swimmers, either one (1) man and two (2) women or two (2) men and one (1) woman.
- B.5.4 Every team shall start with all swimmers together sixty (60) seconds after the preceding team.
- B.5.5 The allocation of starting positions shall be taken from the automatic random draw.
- B.5.6 The ranking/result shall be decided by the individual time achieved by the third swimmer of the Club / Affiliate.
- B.5.7 At the South African National Open Water championship there will be team events which will be contested on a provincial basis.