



# COVID-19 Club & Area Technical Official Guidelines

February 2021



## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Swimming NSW (SNSW) COVID-19 Club and Area Technical Official Guidelines is to provide recommendations to assist our Technical Officials with dispensing their duties in a COVID-safe manner for meets organised in 2020-21. These guidelines should be read and used in conjunction with specific measures implemented by event organisers, as part of their COVID-19 safety plans.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

All Area and Club events are permissible when they comply with the NSW Health [Public Health \(COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement\) Order \(No 7\) 2020](#). No further approval is required. The Order requires all Areas and Clubs to have a [COVID-19 safety plan](#) for community sporting competitions and full training activities. Clubs and Areas can either use the template provided by NSW Health or develop their own plan to address the checklist of matters. Swimming NSW recommends that all affiliated Areas and Clubs register as a [COVID-Safe Business](#).

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone has a role to play in keeping our sport safe. While it is ultimately the Host Club/Area organising the event that has primary responsibility to stage a COVID-safe event that is compliant with the current Public Health Orders, anyone attending an event has a level of responsibility to themselves and others. Specifically, Technical Officials must read, understand and agree to comply with the event's *COVID-19 Terms & Conditions* and *Meet Information for Attendees* prior to nominating and/or attending an event. These documents should be provided by the event organiser.

## DOCUMENT UPDATES

Version 2.1 published Tuesday, 16 February 2021

## COVID-19 TECHNICAL OFFICIAL PROTOCOLS

- The Meet Committee and the Pool Management must have established clear areas of control and compatibility of COVID-19 Safety Plans prior to the Meet and the Referee must be made aware of the arrangements.
- The number of Technical Officials appointed should be consistent and compliant with the COVID-19 Safety Plans and enable adequate social distancing.
- A Pool diagram detailing seating, swimmer movements, excluded areas and exits is strongly recommended.
- Mr/Mrs/Ms \_\_\_\_\_ will be the COVID-19 Safety Officer for the Meet.
- Situations involving large numbers of swimmers and officials congregating together should be avoided.
- Social distancing is strongly recommended.
- Wearing of masks is strongly recommend, particularly where social distancing is not possible.
- Adequate supplies of sanitiser should be available at various points around the competition area.
- A clearly designated person (Club or Pool Management) is to be responsible for the cleaning of equipment. This person should wear gloves.
- All officials will be required to bring their own drink bottle.
- Meet committees should consider the venue facilities before deciding on a plan for food distribution/catering. For instance, barbecue operators should wear masks and gloves and practice good hygiene, and canteens/kiosks should ensure social distancing is being adhered to and use contactless payment (where possible).
- There will be minimal transmission of documents during the meet.
- The Swimmer's equipment does not require sanitisation after every use.
- There should be a clearly defined movement of swimmers to starting positions and exit from the pool.
- Swimmers should leave any clothing so that it is able to be collected without re-entering the competition or marshalling area after their event.
- Swimmers should not exit the competition pool or utility pool via the Marshalling area.

### PRIOR TO THE START OF ANY COMPETITION, THE REFEREE'S BRIEFING SHOULD ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING POINTS TO TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

**Safety:** Please inform the Meet Director or Referee immediately if you become aware of an unsafe situation which may cause harm to yourself or to others at this meet, and we will endeavour to resolve the situation.

**Injuries/incidents:** If you become aware of any incident where a swimmer has become ill or suffered an injury you must immediately advise the Referee.

**Conduct:** Also be mindful of your conduct when around swimmers, coaches and team managers, particularly in making any comments which could be taken out of context and viewed as offensive.

**Speaking to swimmers:** Please refrain from engaging in conversation with the athletes other than when your position requires, unless they commence a conversation with you.

**Focus:** It is imperative that as officials you remain focused on the action or task at all times when required.

**Mobile phones:** are not permitted on pool deck.

**Rule changes:** e.g. Heats will be conducted fastest to slowest or slowest to fastest

**Two-way radios** (if used): take care when start sequence is in progress.

- Use sparingly and with appropriate language.
- Acknowledge messages so that both parties are aware.
- If no acknowledgement, assume that the radio message has not been received and act accordingly.

### **Taping approvals**

- Note any.

## **SNSW COVID-19 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS' DUTIES**

### **REFEREES**

- The whistle sequence for the meet will be with prep whistles/no prep whistles.
- Consider whether "over the top" starting is appropriate for the particular meet under COVID-19 Conditions.
- Any Multi Class Heats should be cleared before and after each Heat.

### **Rule infractions**

- Details and the infraction will be recorded on the program of the reporting official, which may be required in the event of a protest.
- The Referee will advise the Recorder specifying the event, heat and lane number of the disqualification.
- The Referee will either:
  - complete the Rule Infraction Report Card.
  - The Referee will provide the Rule Infraction Report Cards in a plastic sleeve to the Announcer.
  - The announcement will be made at the completion of all the heats in that event. The document or sleeve will not be handled by the Announcer.
  - The Referee will retain the Rule Infraction Report Cards in the plastic sleeve and hand it in at the end of the session,

Or

- Complete the infraction through an electronic form set up on an iPad/similar device, which submits to a laptop for the Announcer to read out (non-contact method)

### **STARTERS**

- We recommend one (1) Starter for each session.
- The second Referee or JOS 1 may be required to deputise as Starter. In that event, the microphone must be sanitised on change over.
- Starter's microphones are to be replaced or sanitised after each session and/or on change of Starters.

## **CONTROL ROOM AND RECORDERS**

- By radio or verbally confirm to the Referee the Infraction details.
- Note time of announcement.
- Carefully advise the Recorder of the DQ details as there will not be a document for checking at the time results are being checked.
- The DQ notated program will be handed in at the end of the session.

### ***Other changes***

- UK Judging - Race sheets should not be used for Clerks of Course (Marshals) and Check Starters, however one copy may be useful for a Recorder/Scribe to collect times where stopwatches are used or for when a SAT/Dolphin time is missed.
- Clerks of Course (Marshals) and Check Starters should use their own meet programs.
- Single page programs will be required for affixing to the walls in the Marshalling Areas.
- If Manual Timing is used, Lane Timekeepers should record times in their own meet program and then provide these to the Recorder either in a plastic sleeve and placed in a designated area of the recording room or verbally, as and when required.

## **ANNOUNCER**

- The Referee will provide the Rule Infraction Report Card in a plastic sleeve.
- The DQ announcement will be made without the document or sleeve being handled by the Announcer.
- Record on their own program the time of announcement.
- The DQ notated program will be handed in at the end of the session.

### ***Other changes for announcements if Self Marshalling is adopted.***

- Swimmers will report to the chairs behind the blocks for their event, preferably via the call room, as per the following process:
  - In order to avoid congestion and ensure social distancing, please note that swimmers need only be available to enter the call room (Marshalling area) or chairs behind the blocks:
    - Four (4) heats prior to their heat for 50m, 100m and 200m events.
    - For events 400m and more, two (2) heats prior to their event.
- Where a swimmer has entered but will not be in attendance for a day or the whole meet, the Recorders should be advised prior to the commencement of the day's competition.

## **INSPECTOR OF TURNS**

- Ideally the Chiefs should have two-way radios.
- Indicate to your Chief and report directly to the Referee as soon as the C/IOT has organised lane IOTs to replace or cover.
- In Breaststroke events, your jurisdiction is to the completion of the second stroke.
- Observe the 15m protocols.

- Clearly record the details of any Infraction Report on your program. This may be requested by the Referee or Jury in the event of a Protest.
- Session Referees will instruct you as to the session's requirements.
- Report relay change over infractions. Note change over breach on program.

## **JUDGES OF STROKES**

- Observe the 15m protocols.
- Be 100% sure of any infringement. Benefit of doubt must be applied.
- 50m start area to the 15m rope report to Start Referee.
- Clearly record the details of any Infraction Report on your program. This may be requested by the Referee or Jury in the event of a Protest.
- JOS should closely monitor the 15m rule.
- Check with the Referee if you are uncertain as to your area of responsibility.
- For JOS, please sit after swimmers have reached the 65m mark in individual freestyle events over 200m. Please sit down at the end of all other races if you do not have an infraction to report.
- In Multi Class events:
  - After the whistle out at the conclusion of MC events, Judges of Stroke #1 and #4 are to remain standing near the finish end of the race to check goggles of S11 swimmers and to observe all swimmers leaving the water before returning to their seat.
- **Rest periods:** Referees will indicate each session where they would like relief or rests implemented.

## **CHIEF TIMEKEEPER and TIMEKEEPERS**

- Observe the 15m protocol of when to stand.
- Avoid putting your feet on the black top of the touch pads (if used).
- If you have been allocated as a Timekeeper at the commencement of a session, please report to the Chief Timekeeper in the designated room at least 30 minutes prior to the session commencing.
- Please bring your own drink bottles, pens and pencils.
- You may be required to assist with backstroke ledges (if used).
- No mobile phones are allowed on pool deck.
- As athletes are concentrating on their race, avoid conversations with swimmers, unless initiated by the swimmer.
- Maintain silence during the period between the Referee's long whistle and the point where the starting signal is activated by the Starter.
- To facilitate COVID-19 cleaning measures, you may be replaced at hourly intervals on the hour.
- If Manual Timing is used, Lane Timekeepers should record times in their own meet program and then provide these to the Recorder either in a plastic sleeve and placed in a designated area of the recording room or verbally, as and when required.

## **CLERK OF COURSE (MARSHALS)**

- Clerks of Course will work from their own program (not UK Lane Time Race Sheets).
- Where swimmers will be using conventional marshalling:
  - The COVID-19 Safety Plan will determine how many seated heats.
  - Ensure social distancing is encouraged.
  - Avoid large groups in this area.
- Where swimmers will be Self-marshalling:
  - The COVID-19 Safety Plan will determine how many seated heats can be placed behind the start area.
  - A Call Room (Marshalling area) should be setup with some rows of chairs in case there is a need revert to full Marshalling.
  - Swimmers have the option to either report directly to the row of chairs behind each lane or proceed through the Marshalling area to pool deck competition area.
  - Ensure that the session program is displayed in this area so swimmers can check their heat and lane.
  - When required, affix lane numbers in chute area to ensure social distancing for awaiting heat.
  - Encourage swimmers, coaches, parents or team managers, and representatives to mark off early for any 800m and 1500m events.
  - Ensure that swimmers leave clothing so that it is able to be collected without re-entering the competition /marshalling area after their event.

### ***The Clerk of Course (Marshal) will also:***

- Assist swimmers if needed and help Team Managers and Coaches to find information on events, withdraw swimmers and make enquiries.
- Control and invite the next heat of swimmers and manage entry of swimmers into the Call Room (marshalling area). Swimmers are permitted to report to the chairs behind the blocks for their event, preferably via the call room, as per the following process:
  - For the first heats of sessions these heats should report 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
  - In order to avoid congestion and ensure social distancing, swimmers need only be available to enter the call room (marshalling area) or chairs behind the blocks:
    - Four (4) heats prior to their heat for 50m, 100m and 200m events.
    - For events 400m and more, two (2) heats prior to their event.
- Where appropriate, notate program accordingly e.g. scoreboard time or other unusual.
- Direct the swimmers to the designated area encouraging social distancing.
- Direct the next heat to move to the chute area when the previous heat has moved to behind the timekeepers.

**Amalgamations** will only be implemented when simple situations occur. In these circumstances, promptly get approval from the Referee and proceed to the Recorder with suggested heat and lane clearly documented on the program.

## CHECK STARTERS

- Check Starters will be available as a support person in directing swimmers on the pool deck and when requested by the athlete.
- Check Starters will work from their own program (not UK Lane Timer Race sheets).
- Check Starters will encourage social distancing.
- Clearly call the Heat number as you commence to lead swimmers to behind the timekeepers when it is vacated by the previous heat.
- Athletes are expected to know their event, heat and lane number.
- Check swimmer's names behind the starting platforms and move to the usual start position for the Referee. Note those present and any absentees on your program.
- For the first heats of sessions, these heats should report 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- Swimmers have the option to either report directly to the row of chairs behind each lane or proceed through the Call Room (Marshalling) area to pool deck.
- After the start of the previous heat, swimmers may progress to the next deck chair position without causing any interference to technical officials. Swimmers are expected to be at the chair ready for the whistles to start their heat.
- Swimmers are responsible for being ready to take their position on the starting platform or in the water when whistled up by the Referee.
- Swimmers will not be prevented from swimming if they only make it to their seat one heat prior to their event (This is a guide only to allow the event to flow. Leniency will be employed by Referees whilst this process is initially implemented).
- If they miss their heat, they need to alert a technical official and they will be placed in a spare lane if it becomes available.
- The Referee will ultimately make decisions as to entitlement to swim.
- Swimmers should leave clothing so that it is able to be collected without re-entering the competition area after their event.

## USEFUL LINKS

- [Australian Government three-step framework for a COVID-safe Australia](#)
- [AIIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment](#)
- [Swimming Australia's National Guidelines for Restarting Club Environments](#)
- [Office of Sport COVID-19 information](#)
- [COVID-19: SNSW advice](#)





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