



OPEN WATER SWIMMING

TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

TRAINING NOTES

Edition 3
June 2007

TECHNICAL OFFICIALS' TRAINING NOTES

for

OPEN WATER SWIMMING

Open Water Swimming is to Swimming what the Marathon is to Athletics. An endurance event where athletes attempt to be first over a given course while contending with climatic and other conditions during the race.

Open Water Swimming is the earliest form of swimming that the world knows. It started when someone decided to cross an expanse of water only to find that they could not walk the entire distance. At some time later it was decided to enclose the body of water in which swimmers competed and call the enclosure a "Pool". It appears that the "wheel has turned the full circle" and some swimmers are returning to unenclosed water for their competition.

All that this explains is that Open Water Swimming is not new, it's only the promotion, and organisation and officiating that are relatively new!

Swimming New South Wales Limited (SNSW) has been at the forefront in the encouragement and officiating of this discipline of the sport. Many SNSW innovations are now implemented practices used throughout the world. SNSW, in its quest for excellence, has recognised the need for practical Training notes that will assist in the education of those Technical Officials who wish to increase their expertise and add "Open Water Swimming" to their other achievements. These notes cover the duties of all Open Water Swimming Technical Officials excluding the Referee.

Hopefully they will also assist Technical Officials no matter what the level of competition. "*Murphy's Law*" crops up from time to time and what determines the success of the day is dependent on your knowledge of the Rules, their application, understanding what is required in other roles and our ability to overcome adversity. The swimmers have respect for Technical Officials who are calm under pressure and have a consistent and fair application of the Rules.

The success of any Open Water Swimming event is dependent on the professionalism of the administrators and that of suitably qualified Technical Officials. We can not have either without you.

OPEN WATER SWIMMING is defined as [FINA Handbook (2005-2009)]:

OWS 1.1 ***OPEN WATER SWIMMING shall be defined as any competition that takes place in rivers, lakes or oceans.***

OWS 1.1.1 ***LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING shall be defined as any event in open water competitions up to a maximum of 10 kilometres.***

OWS 1.1.2 ***MARATHON SWIMMING shall be defined as any event in open water competitions over 10 kilometres."***

There are as many types of open water 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, a lake or river, although man-made quarries, pools, rowing courses, reservoirs and the like are sometimes used.

WHO ARE THE TECHNICAL OFFICIALS REQUIRED FOR AN OPEN WATER SWIMMING EVENT?

The following Officials need to be appointed:

Referee	Assistant Referee(s)
Chief Timekeeper plus Timekeepers	Chief Finish Judge plus Finish Judges
Chief Recorder plus Recorders (including computer operators)	Starter
Clerk of the Course plus Assistants (Check Starter)	Race Judges
Turn Judges (1 per alteration of course)	Course Officer
Medical Officer #	Safety Officer
Announcer #	FINA OWS2; SNSW OWS3

- # The responsibilities and duties pertaining to these positions are covered in the notes for completeness. The Organising Committee makes these appointments as they are not Technical Appointments.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

All appointed Technical Officials are:

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| ▲ to be at the venue <i>at least</i> one and one half (1½) hours before the advertised start time of the meet; | ▲ to familiarise yourself with the Course and any other special features of which you need to be aware; |
| ▲ report to the Referee; | ▲ to meet with the other appointed officials; and |
| ▲ be marked present and receive a copy of the program / start list; | ▲ to sign the Attendance Sheet. |
| ▲ be advised of assignment and receive any special instructions; | |

You may be asked to assist with the course set up or with the registration and numbering of swimmers.

As Open Water Swims are conducted by necessity “outdoors” it is necessary for all Technical Officials to be aware of, and prepared for all climatic conditions. Suitable clothing that provides protection from the elements should be worn. Sun screening lotions should also be brought by the Technical Officials, chairs and umbrellas are optional, but they certainly beat sitting on a rock or the ground for an extended period of time. At the venue drinking water may be scarce so it is prudent to bring a few litres with you particularly when the day is hot. The Organising Committee will advise if food will be available on the day, otherwise it's up to you to bring sufficient to sustain yourself for the day. A few minutes taken in preparation are well worth the effort when compared to a recovery period from the effects of the sun, dehydration or cold.