



OWS STAGING OF EVENTS WATER TEMPERATURE POLICY

Adopted or Amended	By Whom	Date
Adopted	Board of Directors	13 th December 2010
Amended	Board of Directors	22 nd December 2010
Amended	Board of Directors	1 st October 2013
Reviewed	Board of Directors	3 rd November 2015
Reviewed	Board of Directors	5 th December 2017

Introduction:

In December 2010, Swimming New South Wales' Technical Open Water Swimming Committee, as part of its risk minimisation program, conducted an investigation into recommended maximum and minimum temperatures for safe swimming in the open water environment. At that time there appeared to be no recognised authority that has published such information.

A safe maximum water temperature is a risk that had not previously been considered, whereas, a minimum water temperature for the conduct of open water swimming events has been set by FINA and is currently 16° Celsius and for Masters 18° Celsius. In July 2013 FINA set a maximum water temperature for OWS events being 31° Celsius.

The Board has considered the TOWS Committee recommendations and has determined the following Policy.

Policy:

1. Purpose

The purpose of the OWS Staging of Events Water Temperature Policy is to discharge the duty of care that Swimming NSW has to its members and invited guests who participate in events staged and or approved by Swimming NSW, its Areas and Member Clubs and to any other sporting organisation or promoter that seeks the sanction of its OWS event from Swimming NSW or requests permission from Swimming NSW for the results of swimmers participating in an un-sanctioned event to be used for qualifying purposes.

2. Audience

This Policy applies to all OWS events under the control of Swimming NSW and/or its Areas and member Clubs for the purpose of open water swim meets and/or events (event) that are authorised, hosted, run by, or for and on behalf of, Swimming NSW and/or its Areas and or its Member Clubs or such other entities that have applied for and received approval to run an open water swim meet by Swimming NSW and/or its Areas (event organisers).

3. Water Temperature Ranges

- 3.1 The minimum water temperature for the conduct of an open water swimming event irrespective of distance is 16° Celsius.
- 3.2 The maximum water temperature for the conduct of an open water swimming event irrespective of distance is 31° Celsius.
- 3.3 The water temperature shall be taken in the manner specified within the OWS Rules prior to the start of the event.
- 3.4 Where the water temperature exceeds 31° the event, no matter the distance, will be postponed until the water temperature has dropped below 31° Celsius.

3.5 Where the water temperature exceeds 29^o Celsius, but has not exceeded 31^o;

- feeding stations are permitted even where the rules preclude them
- throughout the event the water temperature shall be carefully monitored by the Safety Officer in company with another independent person (who will witness the taking of the temperature and the recording of temperature readings) with such information being immediately relayed to the Chief Referee.
- Should the water temperature increase then the policy conditions referred to in conditions 3.2 and 3.4 shall be applied immediately by the Chief Referee.

3.6 Where the water temperature was less than 17^o Celsius prior to the start of the event:

- throughout the event the water temperature shall be carefully monitored by the Safety Officer in company with another independent person (who will witness the taking of the temperature and the recording of temperature readings) with such information being immediately relayed to the Chief Referee.
- Should the water temperature decrease then the policy conditions referred to in condition 3.1 shall be applied immediately by the Chief Referee and the event stopped.

4. Bibliography

FINA Open Water Swimming Rules;

Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water – Australian Government, National Health and Medical Research Council February 2008 (Section 4)

Neilsen, B. (1977). Physiology of thermoregulation during swimming. In B. Eriksson & B. Furberg (Eds.), Swimming Medicine IV - Proceedings of the Fourth International Congress on Swimming Medicine. Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.