

Wednesday, 27 November 2019

Dear State and Territory Swimming Associations,

Swimming Australia Rules changes

I am delighted to advise that the Board of Swimming Australia has approved changes to the following documents:

- Swimming Rules
- By-Laws for the conduct of Australian Swimming Events
- Facilities Rules

These are now publicly available on the Swimming Australia website here:

<https://www.swimming.org.au/integrity-policies-rules/rules>

An overview of the changes is presented in the Appendix overleaf. Material changes are shown marked up in the accompanying pdfs (except for the Facilities Rules).

Most of these changes relate to Pool swimming. Changes to Open Water are currently under governance review with an aspiration to release ahead of January 2020 competitions.

We trust that this pack provides a comprehensive description of the changes. If there are questions please collate within your State / Territory and forward to me at officiating@swimming.org.au

Kind Regards,

Ben Ramsden
Swimming Australia, Officiating Manager.

APPENDIX – DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES

1. DISCUSSION

- 1.1 The review of the documents outlined above has been ongoing for a period greater than 18 months. The process has been driven by the Swimming Australia Events team, together with members of the Technical Swimming Committee.

Many of the changes are cosmetic and have been made to reflect changes to FINA and World Para Swimming Rules over recent years, and also the Swimming Australia Competition Framework that was approved in October 2017.

Due to the substantial nature of the changes a marked-up version has not been supplied. Instead the final version of the documents has been reviewed by Swimming Australia's lawyers, Landers and Rogers with material changes highlighted throughout both the Rules and By-Laws. The Facilities Rules have not been reviewed as they directly reflect the rules imposed by FINA with the addition of Swimming Australia's dive entry processes and guidelines for the use of backstroke ledges.

Additional notes are provided under each document heading below.

1.2 Swimming Australia Swimming Rules

This replaces the version approved by the Board in January 2014.

Where there is an alpha notation next to a SW or MC rule, this means that the FINA or World Para Swimming Rule has been altered to reflect practice at Australian Swimming Events. Therefore, rules without the alpha notation directly reflect the relevant FINA or World Para Swimming Rule.

Management of competitions

1. Updates reflect the new and improved technology used at competitions
 - Revised number of Technical Officers required at competitions
 - Updated references to technology
2. Updates to the rules governing the adjudication of turns
 - The Chief Inspector now has the positive obligation to ensure the Inspectors are fulfilling their duties
 - The form and manner in which a breach is reported to the Referee is now prescribed
 - Updates to and improved articulation of the jurisdiction of the Inspectors of Turns
3. Removal of rules regarding Presentation Officers and Press Stewards
 - In a number of instances, Swimming Australia / the management committee is provided new discretion to change the rules (Eg SW 3A, SW 3.1.1.1A)

Impaired swimmers

1. Updated rules regulating the use of support staff for swimmers with impairments
2. Changes to rules regarding how swimmers with impairments may participate in events
 - Tapping devices must now be approved and recorded
 - Changes to how swimmers with only one functional leg may start an event
 - Mandatory requirement for strobe/starting light to be provided for athletes with a hearing impairment
 - New rules regarding what happens if an impaired swimmer enters an occupied lane
3. Additional rules regarding changes of Sport Class in competition

Swimming records

1. Records can only be established in water with less than 3 gr/litre of salt;
2. World Records and World Junior Records can only be established by swimmers wearing FINA approved swimsuits
3. Mixed freestyle and medley relays are now recognised in Long Course records
4. New processes for applying for a World Record with FINA

1.3 Swimming Australia By-Laws for the Conduct of Australian Swimming Events

The By-Laws have seen the most substantial change with the order and wording within the document altered to make it easier for the Swimming community to apply and follow the By-Laws. This replaces the version approved by the Board in October 2011.

Organisational

1. The structuring and formatting of the by-laws has been significantly improved to make them more easily read
 - Headings have been inserted and by-laws are grouped logically
2. The decision-making processes for Swimming Australia have been streamlined
 - there are fewer express requirements for Swimming Australia to consult with committees, the Board, and external bodies.
3. There is increased regulation and accommodation for people with impairments

Competition

1. The number of prescribed events has increased - in particular for girls/women and people with impairments;

- Girls are now able to compete in 1500m events
 - Mixed club relays have been introduced
 - There is an express lists of multi-class events for swimmers with an impairment
2. There have been changes to swimsuit guidelines
 - Women's swimsuits may extend below the groin
 - Additional rules for Age Group Events have been removed
 3. There have been changes to eligibility criteria
 - Changes to minimum age requirements for swimmers (distinguishing and increasing the minimum age for swimmers at open Australian swimming events and Australian Age swimming events);
 4. Swimmer are now required to abide by the Swimming Australia Code of Conduct
 5. The express requirement for Swimming Australia to recognise age records in events in the Australian Age Championships has been removed
 6. A new by-law regulating product technology identification has been introduced

Changes have been made within the Jury of Appeal section of the By-Laws to better protect Swimming Australia from challenges to the decisions of the Referee or Jury of Appeal on the basis of natural justice/procedural fairness.

In addition:

- The discretion to change the seeding rules has been added to provide the options for Swimming Australia to swim the fastest heat first, rather than last as is the current practice.
- The ability to enter composite relay teams into Club Relay events has been added to provide relay practice for athletes from clubs who cannot field a relay team.
- The addition of S17 as a transition class, has been added to assist with athlete wellbeing and welfare and is primarily for athletes affected by re-classification or prior to athletes being classified.

1.4 Swimming Australia Facilities Rules

The Facilities rules directly reflect the FINA Facilities rules ([available here](#)) with the addition of the documents outlined below, which were previously provided electronically to Swimming Australia's members.

- Dive Entry for Competitive Swimming Policy
- Swimming Australia use of Backstroke Ledges Memorandum