

**FINA OPEN WATER
SWIMMING GUIDE**
2018 Edition

FINA



Contents

PRESIDENT`S FOREWORD	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
PART I. Open Water Swimming Event Structure	5
1. World Championships.....	5
2. FINA Marathon Swim World Series.....	5
3. FINA UltraMarathon Swim Series	6
PART II. Technical Organization	7
1. Organizational Structure	8
2. FINA Officials.....	10
3. Referees.....	11
4. Organisational tasks	26
5. Venue and Facilities	32
6. Competition Area and the Course.....	33
7. Start and the Race.....	35
8. Sport Technology, Timing & Scoring.....	37
9. Technical / Team leaders` Meeting	38
10. Medical Services and Doping control	38
11. Safety and security.....	44
12. Accreditation Procedures	44
PART III. Marketing	45
1.1 General	45
1.2 Sponsorship	45
1.3 Advertising	47
1.4 Right packages guidelines.....	49
PART IV. Video and Broadcast Coverage	55
1. For event with or without a Live TV production obligations.....	55
2. For event with a Live TV production obligations.....	55
PART V. Communication & Promotional Activities.....	56
1. Event promotion - pre-event, during and after.....	56
2. Website	56
3. Social media platforms.....	57
PART VI. Sports Presentation	58
1. Key Elements	58
2. Awarding Ceremony	58
PART VII. Rules and Regulations.....	60



APPENDIX 1. Safety Regulations	61
APPENDIX 2. Event Checklist.....	66
APPENDIX 3. Competition Documents	72
Timekeepers and Judges Form	72
Chief Timekeepers Form – determined times	73
Turn Judges Form	74
Chief Judges Form – determined placing.....	75
Recorders Result Sheet.....	76
Infraction Report / DQ Form.....	77
Protest Form.....	78



PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

It is my great pleasure to introduce you the FINA Open Water Swimming Guide 2018.

Still with vivid memories from our 17th FINA World Championships in Budapest (HUN), where our open water competition was a success in Lake Balaton, I am very happy to highlight the importance and worldwide exposure of this spectacular discipline.

Since 2008, the 10km event for men and women in marathon swimming is included in the Olympic Games competition programme.

From that memorable year, five FINA disciplines – swimming, diving, water polo, synchronised swimming and open water swimming – are represented at Olympic level.

This achievement demonstrates the value, strength and popularity of open water swimming, a sport which can be practised by everyone in rivers, lakes or in the sea. It is a sport that is kind to the environment, reminding people of the need for all individuals to preserve the precious vital element of water.

Swimming in open water constitutes the most “natural” of Aquatic sports and the Olympic and World Championships’ achievements represent a fair reward for the hard work and devotion of our 208 Member National Federations in the five continents.

This popularity also highlights the added-value of the aquatic disciplines within the Olympic programme. At the same time, it represents an additional responsibility for FINA. Together with its National Federations and Continental Associations, we must continue working for the development of our Sport worldwide.

This increased visibility also leads to the importance of having such a manual. In this occasion, I would like to thank the FINA Technical Open Water Swimming Committee for the hard work in the production of this useful tool.

I wish all those reading and following this manual a fruitful work and rewarding competitions. Your winning strategy decisively contributes to the success of FINA.

Dr. Julio C. Maglione

FINA President



INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended to set the minimum standard requirement for the staging of a FINA Open Water Swimming (OWS) event. This will create consistency on a global level, uniformity in the format and ultimately but most important promoting OWS to a wider audience. At the same time, it will assist in the training and skill development of officials in the conduct of OWS Competitions to ensure the consistent interpretation and application of Rules and procedures to foster a common understanding of the operation and officiating of FINA Open Water Swimming competitions across the globe.

Every open water swimming event will have specific challenges depending upon the venue, type of water, start and finish points, and safety considerations. While covering these points in general terms, each organising committee should appoint local specialists to adopt the guidelines to fit their specific needs, whilst observing the rules, regulations and policies required for the conduct of FINA Open Water Swimming competitions or those local events conducted under FINA rules.

Whether it is a 1600 metre lake swim or a 25 kilometre ocean swim, a carnival-like atmosphere usually prevails at open water events, despite the arduous demands placed on the swimmers. Great respect is afforded those aquatic athletes who conquer any open water challenge. Those who organize the technical support and provide for the safety of these athletes must also be recognised for their efforts.

For many years, the majority of open water competitions were reserved for the hardy few who would specialize in specific training to overcome the special challenges they would face. However, over the past two decades literally millions of swimmers at every level have ventured into the world of open water swimming. With the increasing popularity of triathlons and the thousands of recreational and competitive open water races now offered around the world, this number continues to increase rapidly. Many of these uninitiated swimmers have little idea of what they are getting themselves into, and the hazards and potential for trouble or tragedy have multiplied. The need for efficiently organising safe swims was always an imperative, and today this imperative is all the more important.

FINA has certainly been at the forefront of this growing phenomenon and has included open water swimming in its World Championships since 1991. New distances and a team event have been added, and National and Continental organisations were encouraged to provide Championship events.

With the inclusion of the 10km event for men and women in the Olympic Games' aquatic programme from 2008, FINA has contributed to increased interest and support for open water swimming worldwide.

This guide serves as a valuable resource to officials and organisers at all levels. Inevitably, sooner or later, the unexpected will occur, and what often determines successful outcomes is knowledge of the Rules, and regulations policies and procedures, their application, good judgement, and an understanding of all the roles and what is required to rectify the situation.



PART I. Open Water Swimming Event Structure

1. World Championships

FINA World and Junior World Championships are organized in every two years. For staging of the World championships please refer to the valid FINA Practices and Procedures, as well as the staging agreement.

- Races and distances:
Distances for both men and women: 5km, 10km, 25km
Team relay event: 5 km with 2 male and 2 female swimmers completing 1.25km each.
- Participants:
Each member federation may enter a maximum of two (2) males and two (2) females per individual event. For team events, the member can enter only one (1) team per event. Only swimmers who are entered in individual events at the World Championships can take part in the Team Event.

Age groups of the junior world championships as of 31st of December of the year of the championship:

- 14-15 years boys and girls
- 16-17 years boys and girls
- 18-19 years boys and girls

- Races and distances:
 - 14-15 years 5 km boys and girls
 - 16-17 years 7.5 km boys and girls
 - 18-19 years 10 km boys and girls
 - Team events in 14-15-16 and U19 - 5 km with 2 male and 2 female swimmers completing 1.25km each.
- Participants:
Each member federation may enter a maximum of two (2) males and two (2) females in each age group per individual event. For team events, the member can enter only one (1) team per event. Only swimmers who are entered in individual events at the World Championships can take part in the Team Event.
- Schedule:
 - Day 1 AM 14-15 years 5 km, PM 16-17 years 7.5 km
 - Day 2 AM 18-19 years 10 km
 - Day 3 AM 14-16 years Relay Event, PM Open Relay Event

2. FINA Marathon Swim World Series

The FINA Marathon Swim World Series is an annual staged elite level competition series. The course may be fresh water (e.g. lake, reservoir, rowing course, river) or saltwater (sea). The Series consist of a number of competitions staged by the Organising Committees under the recognition of host National FINA-Member Federations and staged throughout the year on



dates approved by FINA. The 10km event is organised together with a Mass Participation Event.

An event with over 200 participants taking part shall constitute a mass participation swim. Competition should be organized for different age groups over different distances. The participants will swim at the same location as the elite event and ideally utilise the elite course (in part or a full lap of the elite course).

The mass participation event will:

- Increasing revenue for event organisers,
- Raising the profile of the elite race,
- Providing an opportunity for additional sponsors,
- Increasing participation in open water swimming events,
- Establish a stronger global brand for the FINA 10km events.

For more information please refer to the Mass Participation Swims Event operating manual available on the FINA website.

The Event shall be organized in accordance with the valid FINA Marathon Swim World Series Rules and Regulations and with all relevant FINA Rules. (www.fina.org)

3. FINA UltraMarathon Swim Series

The FINA UltraMarathon Swim Series is an annual staged elite level competition series for a race distance of more than 15 km. The course may be fresh water (e.g. lake, reservoir, rowing course, river) or saltwater (sea). The Series consist of a number of competitions staged by the Organising Committees under the recognition of host National FINA-Member Federations and staged throughout the year on dates approved by FINA.

The Event shall be organized in accordance with the valid FINA UltraMarathon Swim Series Rules and Regulations and with all relevant FINA Rules.



PART II. Technical Organization

Bids to stage a FINA Event shall be submitted to the FINA Office.

Full details of the criteria for staging of a FINA Event are available from the FINA office. Before bids are made the would-be host federation shall clearly establish the following points:

- A suitable course is available that meets FINA Rules.
- All Safety requirements can be met.
- Certification of suitability for use from local health and safety Authorities
- Temperature limits will not be exceeded.
- Sufficient funding can be provided to cover all organisational requirements.
- Sufficient numbers of FINA-qualified open water technical officials are available to officiate during the Event. Ideally, these people should be located in different hotels from the swimmers.

In order to allow FINA to make a fair appraisal of a bid, submitting Federations should ensure that the fullest details are given of the course, organising committee, funding, promotion and media coverage.

Upon being awarded a FINA Event the Host Federation shall notify all member Federations of FINA details of the date, venue and course. Course details shall include type of water (salt or fresh), temperature range, tidal/current parameters, type of escort craft, medical service, safety and details of any competitions taking place on or over parts of the course prior to the event.

The Host Federation shall appoint a liaison officer to work with, and keep informed, through the FINA Office the Technical Open Water Swimming Committee (TOWSC).

The Organising Committee

The Organising Committee appointed by the Host Federation shall be responsible for providing the items or facilities given below, and for checking, correcting and/or maintaining the various requirements before and throughout the competition. The details given in the FINA Handbook concerning Open Water Swimming should be carefully consulted well in advance.

The Technical Open Water Swimming Committee

The FINA Bureau as the Management Committee conducts Open Water Swimming competitions at the World Championships and other FINA events through the appointed TOWSC Commission, which consists of the

- Bureau Liaison to the TOWSC,
- the Chairman,
- the vice-Chairman and
- the Secretary with the other members of TOWSC acting as the assisting body.



The TOWSC responsibilities:

- Co-ordinate with the Host Federation on all details for the conduct of the open water swimming competitions at the FINA World Championships and on other FINA events.
- Conduct a final inspection of facilities prior to the start of competitions, including any automatic timing equipment to be used.
- Make Recommendations to the FINA Bureau of suitably qualified technical officials from National Federations (including the Host Federation) for appointment to officiate at the World Championships and Olympic Games.
- Conduct meetings for the briefings of Delegates and Team Managers of participating member Federations two days before the start of the competition.
- Conduct briefings for Technical Meet Officials who will participate in the control of the competition.
- Prepare a report for the FINA Bureau.

The TOWSC Duties

For World Championships, Olympic Games, and Junior World Championships, the allocation of tasks for the TOWSC will require the participation of all members of the Committee in the preparation and conduct of the competition. In particular:

- **Entries:** To review all applications and start lists. Application to compete will only be accepted from member Federations of FINA. Individual entries from swimmers will not be accepted.
- **Officials:** To check all officials are accounted for.
- **Protocol:** To assist and ensure proper protocol is observed.
- **Media:** To assist the FINA Media Commission and national officer appointed on matters related to FINA.
- **Results:** To review and approve the ratified results list.
- **Medical:** To receive the report of the medical officer on pre-event medicals and in partnership with the FINA Sports Medicine Committee to review the Medical Action Plan and drug testing arrangements, and implementation thereof.
- **Safety:** To receive the report of the safety officer and review the Safety Plan to ensure that all safety precautions are in place for the event.
- **Competition:** To supervise all other arrangements.

For other FINA Open Water Swimming events, these responsibilities are undertaken by the FINA Delegates appointed to the particular event.

1. Organizational Structure

The Organising Committee shall consist of:

- **Event manager**
 - Responsible for the overall conduct of the event.
 - Undertakes and follows up all contractual obligations of the OC.
 - Sets up the organisational structure of the event.
 - Serves as main contact for FINA, the NFs, FINA delegates and referees.



- Competition director
 - Coordinates all technical aspects of the event – schedule, competition course and facilities, equipment, sport technology, result update.
 - Works closely with FINA delegates, referees.

- Accommodation manager
 - Responsible for the board and lodging of participants.
 - Negotiates with the official hotels.
 - Administer and follow up the accommodation demand of the NFs and the FINA delegates.

- Logistics manager
 - Responsible for the local transportation of the participants.
 - Responsible for the necessary logistics of equipment.

- Technical manager
 - Reports to the Event and Competition Director.
 - Coordinates all IT matters.
 - Ensures the necessary hardware.
 - Ensures the necessary conditions for time-keeping, broadcasting and event administration.

- Financial director
 - Establishes and follows the event`s budget, cash flow, invoicing, payments.
 - Confirm fiscal legislation related to the prize money payments.
 - Provides tax declaration form to athletes if requested.
 - Negotiates with FINA accounting

- Head of medical services
 - Must be a physical certified in sport medicine.
 - Ensures that medical facilities and services including anti-doping controls are set up as per Medical Regulations.
 - Verifies nutritional balance and environmental conditions for the safety and well-being of the athletes, officials, volunteers.
 - Ensures medical services and equipment available at the venue.
 - Keeps accurate medical records of all assessments and treatment provided by medical staff during the event.

- Head of media
 - Must have an experience in running a media centre for an international sports event and excellent command of spoken and written English.
 - Prepares an effective communication plan, including promotion, media and PR actions.
 - Collects athlete info and prepares biographies for the media.
 - Prepares and communicates event information to FINA Media Department, local media, TV broadcasters, radio.
 - Ensures the set-up, equipment and operation of the media centre.
 - Prepares and organizes press conferences, and issues press releases.
 - Coordinates interviews with athletes and VIPs.
 - Coordinates the work of photographers to ensure high-quality pictures also available for FINA website.



- Head of protocol
 - Works on and implements the sport presentation program and coordinates the team.
 - Coordinates the awarding ceremony.
 - Responsible for the invitation of the VIP guest and the services provided at the venue.
- Head of volunteers
 - Recruits, selects and educate volunteers.
 - Coordinates the work of the volunteers during the event.

2. FINA Officials

FINA has identified a number of roles as being necessary for the effective conduct of Open Water Swimming competitions. Some of these roles require involvement from early in the planning of the competition whilst other operational roles require involvement for a much shorter time-span - from the Technical and Safety briefings through until they are released from their duties by the Chief Referee following the conclusion of the competition.

For FINA Events, the Chief Referee, Safety Officer and Medical Officer need to work collaboratively with the FINA Technical, Safety and Medical Delegates to ensure all relevant rules, regulations, and other event criteria are fulfilled.

The need to focus on the race and ensuring the competitors are well managed throughout the event, means that technical officials may not act in more than one capacity simultaneously. Officials may only undertake a new duty once all of the responsibilities of their initial posting have been fulfilled.

Unless, a particular role requires an official on-site earlier, officials should be at the venue at least 90 minutes before the start of the competition. Upon arrival officials must report to the Chief Referee (or the Referee delegated this task) and receive an updated start list, and any special instructions as to their duties and assignment.

The following officials shall be appointed at Open Water Swimming competitions:

- A Chief Referee (one per race)
- Referees (2 minimum, additional Referees proportional to race entries)
- Chief Timekeeper plus 2 Timekeepers
- Chief Finish Judge plus 2 Finish Judges
- Safety Officer
- Medical Officer
- Course Officer
- Clerk of the Course
- Race Judges (one per competitor) except for events with a course of 10 km or less
- Turn Judges (one per alteration of Course)
- Feeding Platform Judge (when feeding platforms are used)
- Starter
- Announcer
- Recorder



NOTE: No official can act in more than one role simultaneously. They may only undertake a new role after all of the obligations of their previous role have been fulfilled.

Duties of the officials are defined in the FINA Open Water Swimming Rules,

3. Referees

The **Chief Referee** has ultimate oversight for the conduct of the competition, so his/her responsibilities are wide ranging. The overarching duty is to ensure that the competition is run fairly and in accordance with the rules. This means they need to be involved in the planning of the competition from an early stage to ensure all aspects of the Rules (including Bylaws and Regulations) are respected. This is especially true where there is no Management Committee (refer GR 9.4.2 and BL 11.1.2) appointed. Close liaison with the Safety Officer, Medical Officer and Course Officer are required to ensure a safe competition environment is planned and implemented.

The Chief Referee must be very familiar with the rules and should keep a current copy readily at hand for reference. Despite how well one may think they know the rules, it is always good to refer to the written copy to ensure the application is correct. The most up-to-date version can be found on the FINA website (www.fina.org). The Chief Referee is the decision-maker in any issues so it is important that any decisions are made fairly and impartially, with good judgement, knowledge of the rules and a sense of fair play. The rules do not cover every circumstance, so it is the best judgement of the Chief Referee to determine those matters not covered.

The Chief Referee is responsible for approving all of the appointments of the officials, and ensuring they are present in the appropriate locations to conduct their duties or make replacements or reassign duties as is necessary to conform to the Rules.

In assigning the Referees their duties on the course, the Chief Referee must ensure that

- there are sufficient Referees appointed to be able to cover all the competitors across the whole of the course throughout the race;
- a Referee is present to observe the approach to the finish, and the finish;
- sufficient Referees stay on the course to officiate the race until its conclusion when all swimmers have completed the race or been removed from the water under OWS 6.16.1.

Where Men's and Women's races are conducted simultaneously on the course, the Chief Referee shall designate one each of the Referees group (Chief Referee and Referees) as the principal Referee for each of the Men's and Women's events (OWS 4.10).

Once entries are closed, the Chief Referee should arrange with the Organising Committee to receive a copy of the start list for each event, and confirmation that all conditions of entry have been met, including the coach/handler information and medical clearance should these be conditions of entry. The earlier any deficiencies are identified the more time there is to correct them prior to the start of the event. Because of these entry requirements, it is not recommended that any late entries be accepted. For FINA Events, all entries must be approved by FINA and signed by the swimmers' Federation submitting the entry.



The Chief Referee should arrive at the venue at least 2 ½ hours prior to the scheduled start of the competition to ensure all of the pre-race preparations are in order.

The Rules state that the temperature of the water shall be taken in the middle of the course 2 hours before the Race starts by a commission comprising a referee, a coach, and a representative of the Organising Committee (OWS 5.5). It is not necessary for the Chief Referee to conduct this task directly and it should be considered to delegate this responsibility to a Referee so that the Chief Referee can remain on shore to be available and coordinate the necessary pre-race activities.

Once all swimmers have reported and been checked and numbered, the Chief Referee should receive the report from the Clerk of the Course confirming the final start list of swimmers for the event, and ensure that this information is conveyed to all officials, including safety and medical officers.

Prior to the announcement of the swimmers for the start, the Chief Referee should confirm with the Safety Officer and the Medical Officer that the course is safe, then brief the swimmers and race officials on any special aspects of the race including anticipated weather conditions, any changes since the Technical Meeting including any hazards on the course, the water temperature recorded in accordance with OWS 5.5, and reconfirm the signal for emergency abandonment. Well organised events will have a risk assessment, and emergency plan which should be available to the Chief Referee upon request. If these do not exist then the Chief Referee may decide to conduct a risk assessment and emergency plan, copies of which may be shared with the Organising Committee for the purpose of education.

The **Referees** have responsibility for ensuring the rules are followed across the whole of the course throughout the race. The Chief Referee will assign a position on the course or within the fields for each referee to conduct their responsibilities, ensuring all competitors are judged with equal attention. Referees should monitor the whole of the section of the field they are assigned, spending time watching each competitor or group before moving to the next, and then the next and so on through the field, then back through the portion of the field they are responsible for. Should a Referee have to leave the course for any reason (e.g. refuel or breakdown) they should inform the Chief Referee who will adjust the assignments to ensure all of the competitors on the course remain under the scrutiny of the Referees covering the race.

Referees should use the whistle sparingly to ensure swimmers and coaches/handlers pay attention to it when it is used. Any infringements observed should be communicated to the Chief Referee and other Referees as soon as practicable to ensure an accurate status of infringements is maintained at all times, and that should a second infringement occur, the correct call is made.

The **Starter's** duties will usually be completed within a few minutes following the start of the Race, unless the start is scheduled in waves, or there are multiple events scheduled throughout the day.

Once the Starter has confirmed their appointment, they should contact the Organiser or the Chief Referee and confirm the type of starting device to be used (e.g. gun, horn – or even cannon!) and whether this will be provided by the Organisers or the Starter needs to bring their



own. The start rules also require the Starter to visually indicate the start (OWS 4.7), usually by lowering a flag, so the Starter should also check if this is being provided. If the starter is unfamiliar with the operation of the starting equipment, then a time to learn the equipment operation should be arranged.

If necessary a whistle can be used as the start signal, but this is not recommended and should only be considered as a back-up solution.

Where the start is being managed in waves due to the number of participants, the starter should liaise with the Chief Referee, Recorder, and Chief Timekeeper to confirm the delay to be applied between each wave of the start, and who will advise the Starter of the timings to ensure the starts are made to time accurately.

If there is only one set of timekeepers and the Men's and Women's races are started separately, the same method can be used to start the two races.

Upon arrival at the venue, the starter should check the starting area, and check the starting equipment, confirm whether the start will be single start or waves, and make sure they are present for the pre-race briefing to confirm the start process and answer any questions that may be required.

The **Clerk of the Course** will keep the competitors advised of the time to go prior to the start and at an appropriate time the swimmers will be announced and invited to take up their starting position, either on the starting platform, or in the water behind the start line. The in-water start may be a rope between two points that the swimmers are asked to hold, or a nominal line between two points that they must remain behind until the start signal is given.

On the signal from the Chief Referee, the Starter should raise the flag above their heads at the same time as they give the start command to "Take your marks". When satisfied with the swimmers are ready for the start the Starter should bring the flag down simultaneously with giving the audible starting signal.

If in the opinion of the Referee unfair advantage has occurred at the start, the swimmers may be stopped and the competition restarted. If the rules have not been followed by the competitors, then the rules must be applied. If a swimmer or swimmers go in the wrong direction, as long as the instructions in the briefing have been clearly given, then there is no need to recall the swimmers.

All escort and safety craft should be stationed clear of the start area to ensure no swimmer experiences interference. Escort boats must navigate to pick up their swimmer in such a manner as to ensure all swimmers in the race are not impeded.

Once the final wave of starts is completed the Starter is free to undertake any other duties after making sure their starting equipment is safely and securely stored.

The **Chief Timekeeper's** duties are similar to a pool environment in that they are responsible for supervising the appointed timekeepers and reports to the Chief Referee on their performance, including recommendations on any replacements or additional personnel required.



OWS 3.12 requires 3 timekeepers and this requirement includes the Chief Timekeeper as outlined in OWS 2.

The Chief Timekeeper needs to liaise with the Chief Referee, Recorder and Starter to ascertain the start signal/s that will be given, the time delay for any subsequent starts, and the method to be used to advise the Starter of the correct moment to give the start signal when these are time specific. Where a single set of watches is being used for events with multiple starts, the Chief Timekeeper should also note the actual time of subsequent starts so that an accurate time deduction can be made to calculate the correct time for swimmers in each start wave.

The Chief Timekeeper should ensure that the manual watches have sufficient capacity to cope with all of the swimmers in a field. Two additional watches are started with the primary start signal, so that these watches can be used should a stopwatch fail or be accidentally stopped.

The finish may be a vertical plate, a line suspended above the water or a virtual line between two points/buoys. Timekeepers time all of the swimmers in the race, using the lap/split timing function of their stopwatch. The button should be pushed for every swimmer in the field, even when they arrive as a group, so the count of times matches the number and relative order of finish. Where printing stopwatches are used it is useful to write the number of a swimmer next to their corresponding time every so often to assist in matching the correct times with the correct swimmers.



Timekeepers may not act as judges under any circumstances. The watches need to have sufficient memory capacity to be able to record times for all of the swimmers in the race – if the number of swimmers exceeds the capacity of the available watches, then two sets of timekeepers should be considered and the field split accordingly (e.g. separate sets for men and women).

Where Automatic Officiating equipment is used, Rule OWS 7.2.1 applies in determining a swimmers official time and place. For this reason times are not provided to swimmers or their representatives until after the recorders have compiled the results and these have been checked and confirmed by the Chief Referee.

A draft Timekeepers summary sheet is included in the race documentation at the back of this guide.



Timekeepers need to ensure they have means of travelling to the finish area if this is a separate location to the start.

The Chief Finish Judge is responsible for supervising the appointed Finish Judges and reports to the Chief Referee on their performance, including recommendations on any replacements or additional personnel required.

The finish area needs to be checked to ensure there is a clear and unobstructed view of the finish line for the Finish judges. It may be necessary to negotiate with Timekeepers, and media to achieve this. The Chief Finish Judge also needs to instruct the Finish Judges to record all the places they can, and leave gaps where places have been missed.

The Chief Finish Judge should work cooperatively with the Clerk of the Course and Recorder to note any withdrawals from the race to ensure a correct competitor count is maintained so that the number of swimmers exiting the water matches the number that started the race.

The **Chief Finish Judge** receives the signed finish order sheets from the Finish Judges and uses this information to establish the determined order of finish, which is passed to the Recorder when completed. Some assessment may be required where the Finish Judges have not been able to establish the finish order of all of the competitors. It is necessary not just to look at the number of judges that have placed competitor X in a certain ranking, but also the number of times competitor X is placed ahead of competitor Y.

The Chief Finish Judge will brief the Race Judges on their assignments. The Chief Referee and/or Chief Finish Judge's instructions will cover, but not be limited to the following:

- Rules and their application
- Course
- Safety
- Protocol
- Special instructions.

Where the course is a circuit and the finish area also constitutes a turn on the course, **Finish Judges** may act as Turn Judges, providing that doing so will not interfere with their responsibilities to judge the finish of the race. Should these responsibilities be likely to overlap, then separate officials should be appointed for each role.

Finish Judges must record their placings independently of one another. Where it is not possible to record all the swimmers arriving in a pack, record those that can be identified, and leave a gap on the sheet to indicate missing placings, then place the next swimmer/s that can be identified until all of the field have finished the race or left the water. When recording the swimmers' order, the Finish Judge should not murmur or speak out aloud as this may distract or influence the other Finish Judges.

Once completed, Finish Judges sign their order of finish sheet and then hand it to the Chief Finish Judge to determine the result.

Where it is possible to consult with all the Finish Judges, the Chief Finish Judge may ask for partial results from time to time so that the determination of placings can commence in the gaps between finishers while the race is still in progress, to allow the overall result to be produced quicker at the end of the race.



The Chief Finish Judge and Finish Judges shall observe to ensure competitors touch the Vertical Wall at the finish (at venues where this is used at the finish point of the race) as required in OWS 7.2.3. Any infractions should be reported to the Chief Referee by the Chief Finish Judge

Race judges observe the swimmer/s and coach/handlers they are assigned to ensure the rules are followed. For races longer than 10km, the Race Judges will usually be assigned to the escort boat of each swimmer.

The Race Judges will be assigned to an escort craft by draw immediately prior to the launching of the craft. Once assigned, the Race Judge shall immediately load and board the designated craft. No contact with the swimmer or swimmer's representative shall take place prior to boarding.

The Race Judge shall refrain from offering advice on the best routes to follow, but shall ensure (except on grounds of safety) that the crew follow such directions as the swimmer's representative may give.

The Race Judge shall keep a log on all matters pertaining to the swim. This log shall include violations of rules, time/distance information, and may also include stroke rate, times of feeding and any other incidents. This information shall be kept in a clear manner to enable inspection by a Medical Officer should the ability of the swimmer to continue be in any doubt or the Chief Race Judge if required.

In a small boat for some eight hours or more it is important that a cordial relationship is established and maintained and that the swimmers are given every opportunity to swim the course to the best of their ability.

At all times from the start until the assigned swimmer leaves the water, the Race Judge shall be in such a position as to maintain close observation of their swimmer. With the obvious problems that arise in being on a small craft for this length of time, care should be taken to ensure the Race Judge is fully prepared for personal comfort and sustenance.

Infringement rules (OWS 6.3.1): note that these rules apply to the swimmers' coach/handler and escort craft as if applying to the swimmer directly. Race Judges therefore need to observe the swimmer and their coach/handler to ensure no unfair advantage is taken nor any intentional support given to the swimmer during the race (medical or safety intervention excluded - OWS 6.7.1).

Should it be necessary to intervene to ensure the rules are followed, the matter should be written down, along with the time, and the outcome and then inform the Chief Finish Judge or Chief Referee at the earliest possible opportunity.

Race Judges shall, at all times, bear in mind that they are the Chief Referee's representative, their primary role being to uphold the rules of the competition and to ensure that the swimmer and Swimmer's Representative are competing within the spirit of the sport.

Turn Judges must be appointed in sufficient quantity such that each change in the course can be judged by close observation to ensure all swimmers round the mark in accordance with the course plan and pre-race briefing.



Turn Judges need to closely observe that the swimmers execute each change in the course and do so in accordance with the instructions they have been given. This means observing to ensure the swimmers swim around the course mark in the correct direction and without impeding or otherwise interfering with other swimmers in the race. A record should be kept of the swimmers' numbers (or if this is too difficult a count of the swimmers) as they round the mark. Ideally, the race number of each swimmer should be recorded as they pass the mark, however this is not always possible so a count of the number of swimmers that have passed the mark is required as a minimum. Where an infraction is observed, it should be noted including the swimmer's number and the time, and reported immediately to the Chief Referee.

Many Turn Judges will be in watercraft, unless the turning point is very close to the coast or a fixed platform is provided. Care should be taken to ensure the craft is positioned carefully so that all of the swimmers can be seen rounding the mark, taking consideration of wind, tide, current and other factors to stay close to but clear of the swimming line of the swimmers.

Risk management and event safety were always important requirements, but today there is a higher focus and increased legal obligation in many countries. The **Safety Officer** is probably the most important appointment within the Key Officials group. Ideally the Safety Officer should be a qualified public safety official such as a senior lifeguard, coast guard or fire service officer who is familiar with the management of risk around the conduct of an open water event. The person appointed to the role of safety officer should have the following attributes:

- Specialist skills in recognising risks and possible dangers.
- Can put in place procedures to isolate, eliminate, or minimise the identified risks.
- Coordinate the combined expertise of others into a single cohesive unit to deliver a comprehensive safety plan.
- Good attitude and approach, and appropriate judgment in the implementation of the safety plan.
- Has a good level of spoken and written English.

The Safety Officer will need to get involved in the organisation at a very early stage. They will have input into the consideration of the course and assessment of its suitability for use for the competition.

In addition to the Rules, please note that the Safety Officer:

- Co-ordinates with the Course Officer on all aspects of the course. Checks the tidal conditions/rates of water flow and be satisfied that the course is safe for the conduct of the Championship.
- Coordinates medical concerns and approaches to remedy the problems with the Medical Officer.
- Checks with the Course Officer that suitable warnings of the Championship have been passed to all other craft using, or likely to use, any portion of the course.
- Briefs swimmers, handlers, Race Judges and boat crews on all or any potential safety hazards and the action to be taken should any happen.
- Checks, prior to the start, evacuation procedures and sites of Medical Teams.
- 15 minutes prior to the start confirms to the Chief Referee that, in their opinion, all safety requirements have been met.



- Inspects the safety and swimmers' escort craft as being suitable for the purpose intended. Depending upon conditions appertaining to a particular course, the type of boat used will vary. In general terms the following criteria should apply:
 - The boat should be of sufficient size to be able to contain the crew, the Race Judge and a Swimmer's Representative.
 - During any 25km championships the swimmer will need to receive refreshment at regular intervals. Therefore, it is essential that the Swimmer's Representative can get close enough to transfer the required refreshment without impairment or delay to the swimmer.
 - If propulsion of the escort boat is achieved by human effort, it must be remembered that the swimmers will be travelling at up to 4km/h and if there would be a head wind during the championships, staying with the swimmer could be very difficult.
 - When an escort boat with mechanical propulsion is used, the following points should be considered:
 - Exhaust fumes. Vertical or inboard exhausts present little problem; however, waterline exhausts can cause severe problems for the swimmer.
 - At surface speeds of 3 knots or less a standard inboard, or outboard, engine will be liable to 'oiling up' and require periods of high revolution bursts to keep the engine clean. These should always be conducted with the engine in neutral.
 - When a large engine is used and there is a problem with staying alongside a swimmer 'Drogues' can be used. One or two buckets attached to secure lines can be streamed behind the boat to give additional drag. Care must be exercised that the lines cannot become tangled in the propellers or cause interference to any other swimmer or their escort safety craft.
 - Toilet arrangements. Consideration should be given to the personal requirements of those persons who may be in the boat for up to eight or nine hours.
- Measures and records the water temperature at regular intervals throughout the race in accordance with the Safety Regulations.

They will need to survey the course with the Course Officer and identify the possible hazards that may be encountered on the proposed course.

High tide and low tide should be posted in the race information as referral for the swimmers.

- High Tide: The time when the sea or a river reaches its highest level and comes furthest up the beach.
- Low Tide: The time when the sea has reached its lowest level.

The Safety Officer must ensure all relevant public authorities are aware of the competition and have given their approval as required in BL 13.2.

The **Medical Officer** must be suitably qualified for the role and is responsible to the Organising Committee for the provision of adequate medical safety cover to ensure the well-being of all swimmers and provide such facilities as are required under the rules and recommendations of



FINA. During the actual event the Medical Officer's primary responsibility is to the Chief Referee and will also act in conjunction with, and liaise with, the Safety Officer.

The Medical Officer's duties shall include:

- Checking that the water quality for the designated course is safe and suitable for staging the event and to confirm that there are no other factors (such as shark, crocodile or jellyfish) which would render the venue undesirable.
- To compile such data on the status of the swimmers as may be requested by the FINA Sports Medicine Committee.
- Provide for officials, boat crews and swimmers' representatives an explanation of the race medical plan. This plan should include swimmer recovery/casualty evacuation procedures.
- Provide for Medical, First Aid and Paramedic Teams a detailed explanation of the medical plan together with relevant procedures required for its activation.
- Ensure that all swimmers, at the time of finishing or in the case of withdraw, at the point of landing are not requiring further medical supervision.
- Providing advice and assistance regarding suitable intake of refreshment or sustenance to aid recovery from the event.
- Submitting a detailed report on all medical aspects of the Championships together with any recommendations for the planning and execution of medical plans in future events.

The Medical Officer should visually check the water quality certificate and in conjunction with the Safety Officer confirm to the Referee that the conditions are acceptable for the conduct of the competition, including checking factors such as aquatic fauna (e.g. sharks, crocodiles, jellyfish), currents, and temperature or other conditions that may make conditions hazardous.

The Medical Officer is responsible for oversight of all of the medical aspects of the competition. In addition to the rules the bylaws and regulations for FINA events also specify medical responsibilities that need to be observed in the organisation of Open Water Swimming events.

The Medical Officer needs to develop a full Medical Action Plan for the competition detailing:

- First aid on site (both on the water and on the shore)
- The level of equipment to be available on site
 - at the venue
 - at/on the Field of Play
- Doctor/s on-call or medical facilities available for use by Teams and Officials
- Hospitals that swimmers/officials/team staff will be sent to for initial treatments and/or more serious care
- Stable transport from the water to land and from land to more advanced medical facilities and hospitals when deemed necessary. The transport vehicles must allow for on-going treatment or resuscitation.
- Transport plan for situations where referral to hospital is required
- Methodology and equipment for Medical coordination and communication
- Strategy, method and responsibility of actions in case of emergency
- Coordination contacts with safety and other emergency services

The detailed medical plan for any given championship will be unique when the vast range of variables are taken into consideration, especially the variations in temperatures and climatic conditions. It needs to dovetail with the safety plan covering safety at the venue and on the



course, with the medical plan identifying actions and procedures to be implemented once swimmers, officials, coaches or others are evacuated to the shore.

The Medical Action Plan needs to be widely distributed so that all involved with the event know the necessary information as to what treatment is available where and should someone be taken to hospital or other medical treatment facility, and which one.

Ambulance(s) stationed on site must be comprehensively equipped and staffed with suitably qualified Paramedic personnel to attend to any medical issues experienced on site, including advanced cardiac resuscitation.

Should the race conditions require it, the Medical Officer should provide the final physical examination of the competitors prior to the day of the event, and advise the Chief Referee and the organisers of any, that in the opinion of the Medical Officer, are medically unfit to participate in the competition.

The Medical Officer should ensure the availability of sufficient suitably qualified medical personnel and supervise their examination of the swimmers as they leave the water, either through withdrawal or at the finish of the race in accordance with Rules OWS 7.4 - 7.7. Even when the water temperature and air conditions are good it is advisable to have additional resources at the swim exit. Hypothermia can occur in relatively warm water.

One of the most important factors is course planning, so the Course Officer is another appointee who needs to be involved right from the outset. There are a number of factors and guidelines that should be observed and all need careful consideration for safety and suitability.

These include:

- Climatic data – weather, water and air temperature, prevailing winds (historical for proposed period)
- Water quality data (Historical for proposed period of the event)
- Anticipated tidal/current information
- Ready access for medical evacuation around/along the course
- Access to appropriate facilities for officials and race organisers to perform their official functions, and also support facilities such as bathrooms
- Appropriate permissions to use the proposed course
- Information on the bed of the watercourse (hazards, fastening for buoys)

It is important that the course is determined following local advice and assessment of historical data and measured well in advance. Water quality and current information should be sought from relevant authorities for the relevant time of year early in the planning to assess the suitability of a particular course for an Open Water Swimming event. This is to ensure that changes to the course can be made should weather or sea/water conditions deteriorate. Consideration should be given to planning an alternative course that can be put into effect with the minimum of delay.

The course should be carefully chosen, as the primary concern for all Open Water Swimming events should be the safety of those participating.

The venue will be under the control of one or more local authorities and getting the necessary permissions may take some time, so getting these people on-side and supportive of the event is an essential early planning activity. Commercial users of any venue will always have primary access so it important to gain their agreement and cooperation.



For out of water dive starts from a waterfront bulkhead, jetty or floating platform, ensure that the water depth has been surveyed and that the depth complies with the minimums required (1.4m). A physical check of the starting area should be made well in advance of the competition to ensure that there are no unseen shallow water obstructions in the water.

Once agreed, a course plan needs to be prepared detailing:

- The Start and Finish area/s and distance to shore
- The distance between turning buoys and feeding points where present
- Medical evacuation points on the course
- Race Control office
- Marshaling area

This document is key, as it will form the basis for planning for many aspects of the competition, including athlete preparation, safety and risk management planning, and the Medical Action Plan.

Some additional points:

- Prior to the first briefing meeting ensure that all aspects of the course are such as to conform to the initial safety clearance given at time of application.
- Ensure prior to the first briefing that no obstructions exist on the course other than those already identified.
- Confer with, and keep fully briefed, the Safety Officer.
- At the briefing meeting ensure that large scale maps of the course, clearly showing start, finish and all turns, are available for swimmers' representatives, Race Judges, all Officials and the media.
- Confirm with all Turn Judges and allocate transport to their positions, ensuring sufficient markers and flags are available.
- Check that sufficient transport is available to ensure that Turn Judges will be on station in time to carry out their duties and that sufficient arrangements have been made to ensure their collection after the last swimmer has passed their post.

The **Course Officer** probably needs to be the first person at the course on the day of the competition. Unless it's been possible to set-up the course the day before, there is a lot to be done before the swimmers and officials arrive on the course and just 90 minutes before the start will probably be insufficient time for all that has to be done. Even where things have been set-up the day before it is essential to re-check everything to make sure nothing has changed or disappeared overnight. Just when you least expect it something will undoubtedly not go to plan and require additional time to correct.

Check that the start and finish areas are correctly set-up and marked properly, that equipment is installed and in proper working order.

Ensure that course alterations are all correctly positioned and marked (Buoys, Markers, or other moored craft that are used to define turning points or alterations in the course). GPS is a good tool to quickly check the positioning if you have this tool available.

In company with the Referee and the Safety Officer inspect the course and markings prior to the start of the event.



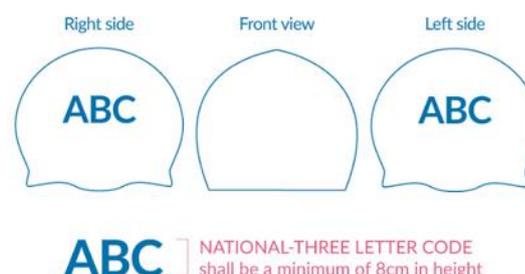
Check the Turn Judges are in their correct positions prior to the start of the race and confirm this to the Chief Referee. This is particularly important, as it is the Course Officer's responsibility to ensure they are all in place, so that they can properly perform their duties.

The Course Officer will probably be the last person off the water following the conclusion of the competition, as everything that has been put out for the race needs to be collected back again and the course returned to its original condition. Check with the Chief Referee before any equipment is removed from the course – there is nothing more embarrassing than finding that part of the course has already been removed and there are still swimmers on the course wanting to swim around the buoys that have been lifted!

The **Clerk of the Course** is responsible for the check-in, numbering, and management of the swimmers prior to the start of the race, for ensuring their clothing and equipment is looked after, keeping a check count of the number of swimmers in the water during the race – and also during the training times – and that they are looked after at the end of the race until their coaches/handlers arrive to attend to them.

Depending on the number of swimmers, it will probably be necessary to appoint more than one Clerk of Course in order to ensure all pre-race functions are addressed. Timekeepers and Finish Judges may be able to help with the pre-race activities to prepare the swimmers for the competition. In the pre-race area, the Clerk/s of Course must:

- Check-in the swimmers (and their coaches/handlers where required).
- Check the swimsuit to be worn is on the FINA 'Approved' list and not more than one is being worn or if wetsuits are being used, comply with the FINA wetsuit guidelines.
- Check/issue caps in accordance with the criteria for the race.
- Check all swimwear (caps, suits and goggles) comply with FINA Advertising guidelines if required.



- Check the swimmers finger and toe nails are trimmed and all jewelry has been removed (including in the mouth, navel, or other body piercing jewelry).
- Number (preferable done by tattoos) the swimmers on both shoulders, upper arms and the backs of hands.
- Issue transponders for races where these are being used and receive same back again after the finish.





- Give regular advice of the time remaining to the start of the race.

Clerks of Course need to be onsite well in advance of the start of registration so that they are well prepared for the swimmers' arrival and can perform their duties quickly and efficiently before the race.

Copies of the start list of all swimmers is required, especially where race numbers have been pre-allocated so that these can be used as reference documents for numbering and transponder allocation.

From the beginning of the check-in and registration process, the Clerk of the Course and Announcer must keep the swimmers, coaches, and officials informed of the time remaining to the start. These announcements should be made at suitable intervals to meet the timelines leading up to the start (close of registration/numbering, final pre-race briefing, introduction, the Start). During the last five minutes prior to the start, announcements should be made at one-minute intervals. Coordinate with the Announcer and Chief Referee to agree the correct time and establish with the Announcer the time intervals to be announced prior to the start, and monitor that these are made at the correct time. Also confirm with the Chief Referee the time and location of the pre-race briefing.

Set-up of the registration area is important to ensure a good flow of swimmers through the check-in and numbering process, so good layout and adequate size of this area is important. Setting up the space with a number of "stations" each checking one of the aspects above is a good way of quickly and efficiently checking the swimmers and keeping the flow moving as they progress through the process.

Entry to the registration/marshalling area should be restricted solely to those personnel required to be there, to avoid overcrowding and to allow the swimmers to prepare for the race without disturbance.

In addition to wide nib pens or stamps for numbering, make sure there are baby wipes or similar to remove any errors that may be made, and also white pens to number any swimmers with darker skin. It is a good idea to bring a manicure set or nail scissors/clippers and file so that any nails may be trimmed and smoothed if required. Sterilising solution is also a good idea for cleaning/sanitizing these tools between use. For Wetsuit races, Pastel crayons are best for numbering the swimmers wetsuits. There are also swim tattoos available for wet suit.

Numbers are applied to the upper arms, shoulder blades, and hands. The numbers should be large enough that the Referees, Race and Finish Judges, and any support personnel can easily read them, and it should not fade during the entire race. Legible numbers are very important as they are the means of identifying each swimmer in the race.

Once all swimmers have registered and been numbered, they may be 'greased' for the race with sunscreen, lanolin etc. before presentation prior to the race. The Chief Referee and Recorder should be informed at this time of any swimmers who have failed to register so that a final count of swimmers competing in the race can be distributed to all officials.

The **Recorders** handle all withdrawals, so anyone wishing to withdraw should be directed to the Recorder. The Clerk of Course and Recorder must therefore work closely together to ensure a correct count of swimmers is maintained.

The final pre-race briefing is usually held in the registration/marshalling area.



The Clerk/s of Course are also responsible for ensuring that all/any clothing and swimmers' equipment left in the pre-race area is kept secure and taken to the finish to be available for swimmers after they have exited the water. A garbage bag with the swimmer's number on the outside is a quick and efficient way of achieving this. Make sure someone is always in the area with the swimmers' gear if it is not a secure space.

The Clerk/s of Course are responsible for the swimmers well-being at the finish and this is also covered in part under the duties of the Medical Officer. Make sure there are chairs available for them to rest on as they exit the water, where they can be checked by the medial support staff, and some refreshments, including electrolyte drinks available, both as they exit the water and in the recovery area. The recovery area should be treated as a closed area, with access only to swimmers, coaches, and necessary officials. In many respects it is similar to the changing room - It is not a place for family members, friends and media.

*It is strongly recommended that a **unique sequential swimmer number** is recorded against each swimmer's name.* This should be done in conjunction with the Clerk of the Course (Marshal) when each swimmer personally registers for his/her race, if the issue of competitor numbers has not been done prior to registration.

In the case of both pre-entry and race-day entry – the Organising Committee should arrange to have a list of numbers starting with the next swimmer number from the pre-entries, i.e. pre-entry has 186 swimmers entered, then the number list should start from 187 for the race-day entries. It is strongly recommended however, that post entries are not accepted unless appropriate systems have been put in place to handle this, and allowance made for sufficient safety craft.

If the number of swimmers is fairly small (less than 100) and the meet is pre-entered, consider keeping the number assignments for each sex to a block of numbers. Example 45 women and 40 men entered. Assign women numbers 1-45 – assign men numbers 50-90. This grouping will help Referees and Finish Judges during the meet. It may also help when breaking out the scoring after the event. It is also possible to have different color numbers for men and women.

In case of championships with several race days, the numbering should always start with number 1.

In conjunction with the Clerk of the Course (Marshal) issue to and record a unique sequential number for each swimmer as he/she registers. Registering is the same as reporting to the Marshaling Area at a "Pool" Meet and having your presence noted in preparation for your race.

The importance of unique sequential numbering cannot be over stressed. Prior to the start of the race the Chief Referee will ask for the exact number of swimmers who have registered. With this information he/she will inform the Referees, Judges, swimmer support and Medical personnel. If two swimmers are issued with the same number for races occurring at the same time, during the race and at the finish the Recorders will have no way of determining whose times have been recorded. If someone fails to complete the race and leaves the venue without reporting to the Recorders there is no way of knowing until someone asks "Have you seen so and so?". This type of situation can lead to an unnecessary search and rescue situation to find the missing swimmer. *Be assured this is not a pleasant task.* Nor are the ramifications of knowing that there may be a "lost swimmer".

Extreme care must be exercised.



It is also strongly recommended that concurrent sets of identical numbers never be used for men and women even if they are separately swum. The same numbers being used for both groups will cause confusion for all Officials at some stage of the race.

- Only the Recorders issue and record the competitor numbers.
- The numbers are unique and sequential unless otherwise dictated.
- No official should leave the venue with recording material, nor should they leave without the permission of a functional Chief, or the Chief Referee.

There have been occasions when protests have been made and the Jury of Appeal has sought to investigate the matter only to find that the necessary officials have already left, in some cases taking their paperwork with them.

The only time when the number of swimmers registered does not equal the number in the water for the start is when someone withdraws after registration/check-in but prior to the start. If this occurs then all relevant personnel must be informed. These include the Chief Referee and Referees, Judges and the Recorder. **All athletes must be accounted for!**

The swimmer numbers are recorded on the Swimmers' entry card. From the entry cards the Master Control/Results Sheets are prepared. While the Results Sheet is primarily for recording results (lap times and finish times and finish order). Its preparation is a secondary check that each swimmer has been issued with a unique sequential number.

Withdrawals before the start and during the competition are received by the Recorders who relay this information if before the start to the Clerk of the Course and if after the start to the Referees, the Safety Officer, and Medical Support Personnel. It is important that at any time throughout the event that the Recorders are able to supply the Chief Referee with an update of exactly how many swimmers are still in the water at any given time – even after some of the swimmers have completed the event.

Depending on the configuration of the course, Recorders receive intermediate lap times or turn buoy times (course positional times at a predetermined point i.e. half way) at various times throughout the race. At the Finish, Recorders will receive the final time for each swimmer. This may be a printout from a stopwatch with an inbuilt printer or a time sheet with elapsed times and swimmers' position number recorded by a Finish Judge.

The times recorded on the Master Control/Results Sheet are received from the Chief Timekeeper. Depending on the type of timing system used, the exact format of these sheets may vary.

As the swimmers cross the start/finish line or round a predetermined point the Timekeepers record each swimmer's time by the split lap function, if requested to do so by the Chief Timekeeper. Finish Judges or Turn Judges record the order of the swimmers by swimmers' numbers. Where a stopwatch is used that has an inbuilt printer the first swimmer number is recorded against the first time printed and then the last swimmer number in the group. It is useful from time to time to record the swimmers number on the printout as a cross-check.

The Finish Judge's placement sheet and the Chief Timekeeper's time sheet with the determined times are forwarded to the Chief Recorder whose team will merge the place finishes with the finish times and resolve any discrepancies.

After all lap times have been recorded on the Master Results Sheet, the places as determined by the times are checked against the Finish Judges' finish places. Where the Judges' places



and the finish times agree the places are recorded in the Place Column remembering to separate the Men's and Women's events and Age Groups where the competition dictates. If there is a discrepancy between the Judges' orders of finish and the times recorded by the Timekeepers the matter is referred to the Chief Referee for his/her determination.

Video replay can be extremely helpful in resolving discrepancies. Swimmers that are allowed to finish the race but are out of the time limit specified in OWS 6.17 shall be included in the results at the end of the field with no time or place and the designation "OTL".

In case the race had to be interrupted, but official ranking can be determined, swimmers who has not finished the course should be included in the results with the designation "NT".

Once the Chief Referee has determined the result the Recorder will complete the Place Column prior to the posting of Results. If team or age group scoring is indicated by the Meet Information, the Recorders are tasked to tabulate those results and points.

For races of 10km or less, or where the race is run over a circuit course such that individual escort boats are not appropriate, the Feeding Platform Judges will be located on the feeding platforms to supervise the activities on the platform and the feeding process.

Access to the platform should be limited only to approved coaches/handlers allocated to that platform (by wristband or other access device) and any other approved persons. It is useful for the Feeding Platform Judge/s to conduct the registration of the nominated feeders and check the feeding poles comply with regulations and safety requirements, and issue access control devices for the platform. To ensure ready access to the coaches conducting the feeding, access by any other people to the platform should be limited to those necessary to be there for safety or operational reasons. Media cameras may be permitted in limited numbers only where they do not interfere with the operation of the platform.

Management of the platform during the event should maintain fair play behaviour to ensure all feeders have adequate opportunity to prepare and to feed their swimmers without interference. Remember that infringement rules (OWS 6.3.1) note that these rules apply to the swimmers' coach/handler and escort craft as if applying to the swimmer directly. Feeding Platform Judges therefore need to observe the swimmer and their coach/handler to ensure no unfair advantage is taken nor any intentional support given to the swimmer during the race (medical or safety intervention excluded - OWS 6.7.1).

Should it be necessary to intervene to ensure the rules are followed, the matter should be written down, along with the time, and the outcome and then inform the Chief Referee at the earliest possible opportunity.

4. Organisational tasks

A) Advance preparation

- Permissions

In order to run an event effectively, sufficient planning needs to be in place with entry forms being made available. The starting place for this is the Local Authorities, site and land-owners (as applicable) and Local Emergency Services (including Hospitals).

All preliminary notification of the event should include:



- **Health and safety information:** special local conditions, water temperature, light conditions and anticipated water conditions;
- **Format:** pool, river, lake or open water swims, wave starts, age categories;
- **Result:** show, when, where;
- **Disclaimers:** place a disclaimer on the entry form;
- **Medical conditions:** this information should be clearly stated on the entry form and include age, allergies, and any medication.
- **Conditions of Entry:** any special conditions of entry such as whether a coach/handler must be nominated on entry form, entries need to be submitted/signed by National Federation office, etc.

Any alterations to the published information including safety issues need to be made available either in the race information pack or displayed in a prominent position and included in the race briefing.

- Safety plan

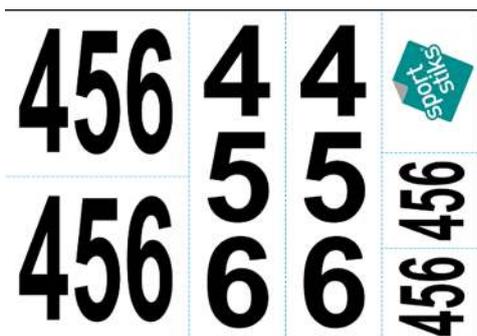
The safety plan should include information on the medical services and emergency procedures provided during before and during the race, as well as the number of boats, kayaks, life guards and other safety personnel during the training times and the competition.

B) Race organization

- Registration

The registration procedure needs to be clearly explained to competitors before the event. An area should be made available for registration that can cope with a number of entries. There should be a clearly defined entrance and exit point with marshals to ensure no undue delay occurs.

It is standard for registration to:



- Check disclaimer is signed, to include medical information and ability to swim the distance;
- Check competitor against list of entrants to determine starters, etc.;
- Issue race numbers (preferable tattoos);
- Check competitor information is correct.
- Check Swimsuit is approved, no jewellery is being worn and nails are trimmed

The registration area is also a good place to have a race information board with race details and any last-minute changes to the published programme.

- Personnel Support

Local swimming, canoe and rowing clubs are good sources of event marshals and escorts as well as local gyms, health clubs, scouts/guides, women's groups and service organisations (e.g. Rotary).

It is important you look after and identify marshals, who will then be willing to assist in the following years or for future events. This includes feeding them, donations to their clubs, etc.



Ensure marshals, are of a calibre fit to carry out the function required. Brief them on their exact duties and responsibilities as far in advance of the event as possible and ensure each marshal knows their exact location. This can be done with maps or by a site visit. Each marshal should be given detailed race information, water data, details of emergency procedures, radio and contact numbers and the name of the safety officer (including call sign) and race judge. In longer events, refreshments should be supplied and/or relief marshals arranged.

All marshals should be issued with safety equipment and clothing including weather protection and life jackets.

The following events will require marshalling and the type of venue will dictate the duties required. These may include refreshments, car parking, registration, timing and results.

- **Open water swims:** safety crew, start/finish marshal, personnel to control spectators and others;
- **Post-race:** helpers are needed to clear up, take down signs, dismantle barriers, pick up litter, etc.

- Race Briefing

There should be a separate briefing for both competitors and officials, safety crews & marshals. The timing of the briefings needs to be clearly advertised beforehand. The competitors' briefing should take place in an area that allows the expected number of competitors to gather and hear the information clearly. Any information updates can be passed on at the briefing.



- Start and Finish

The start and finish need to be clearly defined. The start procedure should be made known to all competitors and there should be an emergency system to either stop the event or change the course.

- Communications

Setting up the System: A system can be technically advanced or simple, but it does need to be tried out in advance of the race. The system needs to be able to:

- Contact the Race Organiser in case of problems, queries or emergencies during the race;
- Contact the on-site medical personnel;
- Contact external medical services quickly;
- Relay information to the commentary team;
- Contact the Chief Referee.

One practical option is to hire communication units, or to hire the units and allocate them to selected personnel. Separate channels for Safety and race officials is recommended if this is possible.



An alternative is to use mobile phones as the majority of people have them these days. This is likely to be the least costly option if it is feasible, and a list of telephone numbers can be issued to all communication officers in advance, including the central information point (need to check for mobile phone or radio black spots before the event).

- Information

Information needs to be made available to all parties concerned. For large events, a good Public Address system can be hired and a race commentator briefed. This needs to be audible in as many areas as possible. Appeals and calls for particular personnel can be heard immediately.

- Finance

Race Budget: A race organiser needs to prepare a race budget. Without this it is not possible to accurately chart and calculate income, expenditure, committed funds or the balance of the account at the end of the event. A race budget needs to be approved in advance by the appropriate officers and the financial responsibilities understood. Extra or unexpected costs might be incurred from spectator facilities needed, attendance by the Police, etc.

Entry Fees: The setting of an entry fee for the mass participation event is a decision made by the race organiser.

Financial Security: It is important that the race is able to fulfil its financial obligations. Failure to meet these commitments reflects badly on the sport, FINA and the race organisers.

- Course preparation and risk management

The organiser should make sure that the choice of water for an open water swim is suitable for the purpose and that the competitors are not being placed in any danger due to the location or condition of the selected water.

There are a number of factors that need to be considered and documented before an area of open water is used for an event, dependant on whether a sea, lake or river swim is being considered.

- Access, condition, sufficient space and proximity of start and finish points
- Likely water temperature (set event minimum and maximum temperature)
- Currents or eddies
- Water quality
- Hidden, overhanging or underwater hazards
- Other water users
- Minimum depth of not less than 1.40 m. at any point, including start and finish
- Conditions underfoot at start and exit
- Sites for medical evacuation along the course

The organisers should consult with regular users of the chosen water – fishermen, lifeguards, canoeists, recreational boaters, windsurfers, etc.

Access to the area is very important as this will not only determine how each event should take place but also, in the event of an emergency, how emergency services would gain access to the start and finish areas and to the course.

Course design should allow for minimal congestion at the race start.



The start and finish areas should be clearly defined. The start should be wide enough so the proposed number of competitors can make a safe start free from interference from others. The finish area should be marked so that there is no confusion as to exactly when the course is completed.

The actual swim course should be marked with buoys that are clearly visible when in the water. Turn buoys should be at least 1.5 - 2 metres high in the water and of a different colour to any guidance buoys. All markers should be fixed so they will not move in prevailing water conditions or tide turns or wind. A lead boat or canoe may be required for the leading swimmer. Swimmers must start with swim caps marked with Identification in accordance with the rules or sequentially numbered, – ideally these should brightly coloured.

- Safety Management

Safety craft and/or canoes must be provided. Personnel assigned to water safety should be to the ratio to provide close support to the swimmers throughout the race. In addition to canoes, motorised safety craft should be employed with full warning, first aid and warming/cooling facilities.

Emergency exits and evacuation points should be marked for swimmers to leave the water.

Consider what is the safe number of swimmers to have in the water at any one time.

Even when the water temperature and air conditions are good it is advisable to have additional resources at the swim exit. Hypothermia can occur in relatively warm water, particularly to weaker swimmers, as can hyperthermia in relatively cool water with other environmental factors coming into account when considering warming. A cut off time for the swim should be agreed with the race official/referee prior to the event. If any swimmer fails to complete the course by the cut off time they should be removed from the water, as decided by the Chief Referee. The cut off time will be dependent on the length of the swim as described in OWS 6.17.

- Environmental Conditions

The **Chief Referee** on the recommendation of the **Safety officer** or **Medical officer** will shorten or cancel the swim if the water temperature falls below 16 degrees Celsius or exceeds 31 degrees Celsius. Excessive water flow or wave conditions will also affect any decision as well as a deterioration of weather and light conditions. The temperature should be taken as specified in the FINA rules and Safety Regulations. Wet suits are compulsory for events with a water temperature less than 18 degrees Celsius, and optional for events between 18 degrees Celsius and less than 20 Degrees Celsius. For all open water swims alternative plans should be made, in case environmental factors make the swim unsafe forcing it to be cancelled or curtailed.

- Water Quality

Water quality is of prime importance. The local Environment Agency should be contacted before the event for advice on the area of water to be used. Water testing should be arranged and the results displayed for swimmers to view prior to entry to the water. Water quality results must be available based upon two samples within 10 days prior to the event and a third sample performed on the day of the event. The third sample will be relayed to the Medical Officer as soon following the event as possible, indicating if any unforeseen contamination had occurred in the day or hours immediately prior to the event.



5. Venue and Facilities

Choosing the correct venue is one of the most important decisions in the conduct of an Open Water Swimming competition, as the safety of the racing is closely linked to the site that is chosen.

Some things to consider:

- Where does the water flow from and to?
- Is there a tide or current?
- What is the average water temperature for the time of the proposed swim? Is a different time of day or time of year better?
- What is the water quality and is it approved by the local authorities as being suitable for swimming in?
- Is the course free from marine traffic or other hazards? Are there commercial users that have to be considered?
- What is the depth of the water across the whole of the course? And the bottom? Are there any underwater hazards?
- Is there ready access to the start/finish area and the rest of the course, both for people and water craft, should it be necessary to evacuate someone?
- Is there marine or amphibious fauna or flora that may pose a hazard?
- Are the facilities in the start and finish areas adequate for the number of people expected, both in terms of swimmers, team and race officials, and also spectators and public?

Further consideration to be given to:

- Sufficient parking for competitors, spectators and officials, suitably sign posted;
- Toilet and wash/changing facilities (competitors should be advised in advance if these are not available at the venue);
- Baggage storage and secure areas;
- Refreshments and catering facilities for competitors, officials and spectators.

For each of the items above and any hazards identified, a mitigation strategy and feasibility of implementation need to be considered. Undertaking this exercise as part of the evaluation of a course's suitability will quickly identify whether the course can be easily used for the competition.

Gaining the appropriate certification from local authorities will also quickly identify a course's suitability and establish relationships with the necessary authorities that can initiate the goodwill necessary for the conduct of the event.

It is also a good idea to evaluate an alternative course if this is possible, so that planning for the race can quickly be moved to the alternative course should this prove necessary for any reason.

The minimum temperature as specified in the Rules is 16°C, and a maximum temperature of 31°C measured in accordance with rule OWS 5.5.

Although the procedure for the official water temperature measurement is specified in rule OWS 5.5, it is a good idea for the Safety Officer and the Course Officer to measure the temperature in the days immediately prior to the race – This will indicate the likely conditions



for race day and allow considerations to be made should a change in race time need to be considered.

Feeding platforms/craft should be located strategically around the course, such that they are outside the direct swimming line of the race but close to it so that swimmers wanting to feed do not have to swim too far off-line to do so. If possible in closed circuit races, at least one of the platforms should be close to the finish area so that coaches/handlers can see the race finish. Feeding platforms need to be sufficiently large to remain stable during the feeding phase when the coaches/handlers are all on the same side – consider the size or adding more platforms if necessary.

Turning buoys need to be of a contrasting colour to the surroundings and be of sufficient size to be readily visible to swimmers from some distance. Where the course is such that the next turning buoy cannot be seen from the previous one, guidance buoys of a different -colour to the turning buoys should be considered. Buoys used for triathlon, sailing, and other marine recreational activities have similar requirements and it may be possible to borrow suitable items from such organisations that already have them.

The finish area also needs to be clearly visible from some distance so that the swimmers can clearly see it, and the finish apparatus, of a vertical face erected within arm-reaching distance from the water surface. Flags can be a good idea to assist visibility, but also think about the wind loading and forces this can create on the finish apparatus.

A good method of defining the approach to the finish can be to use pool lane ropes tied end-to-end if these are available.

The finish area needs to be constructed to provide stable platforms for the Timekeepers and Finish Judges to work from, with additional space for video finish equipment and possibly media personnel, however the media area should not inhibit the Judges and Timekeepers from doing their jobs.

6. Competition Area and the Course

Certification of the length of the course (preferably by GPS) and suitability of the water must be provided to the TOWSC and the Event Safety Officer.

Course identification. The course is to be clearly marked with distance markers, where practical, every 1km along the course and all alterations/turns to be clearly marked and observed by a Turn Judge. A chart clearly showing the course and any/all turns is to be provided for each swimmer and each Race Judge. For events 10 km and above, where escort safety craft are utilised, a distinctive marker is to be placed to indicate, at both start and finish areas, the point at which escort safety craft may join or must leave their swimmers.

The following **facilities/equipment** are to be provided in addition to those given for the Start and Finish areas:

- Suitable boats for the Chief Referee and Referees to be used and directed entirely at the Referee's discretion.
- Transport to take all Turn Judges to their allocated positions and to retrieve them immediately after the last swimmer has passed, or upon the Referee declaring the event complete.
- A suitable boat to allow the TOWSC Commission and VIPs to view the competition.



- Safety boats as required, having regard to the course.
- For events with a course of more than 10 km, where escort safety craft are utilised, a suitable escort boat for each swimmer. The boat to have sufficient capacity to carry the minimum crew required to work the boat efficiently, plus the Race Judge and the Swimmer's Representative.
- A suitable lead boat that will maintain a position approximately 50 metres ahead of the leading swimmer.
- Landing points along the course at which withdrawn swimmers can be landed and evacuated.
- Points along the course at which patients can receive immediate treatment.
- Spare boats able to substitute should one in service become inoperable, in particular escort boats.
- A supply boat able to provide food and refreshments to all boat occupants throughout the race.
- The start line marking apparatus to be secure, safe and in proper working order.
- Where automatic officiating equipment is used, it must be installed and maintained as approved by the TOWSC, including:
 - Automatic timing system, using touchpad at finish, and microchip transponder technology.
 - Video recording facilities with multiple recording angles and slow motion/stop motion replay
- Audio-Visual System for Starter.
- Public Address System.
- Provision of backup hand timing equipment.
- The finishing point to be checked as securely fixed, safe and in proper working order.
- Turn Judges' positions to be checked and secure.
- Turn or alteration points to be clearly marked.
- Necessary chairs, weatherproof clothing, life-vest, communications equipment and recording books to be issued to all appropriate Officials.
- Suitable containers for swimmers' equipment, their safe storage and transportation to the finish point to be arranged.

Equipment to be distributed to all safety craft and personnel including communications equipment, First Aid equipment, spare towelling material and blankets.

Pre-Race Facilities - The following facilities are to be provided prior to the race day:

- Medical inspection room.
- Briefing meeting room.
- Officials briefing room.
- Course inspection by Swimmers, Team Officials and Race Officials.

Start Area - The following facilities are to be provided in the start area:

- Changing rooms for Swimmers and their Representatives.
- Changing rooms for Officials.
- Room or covered/windproof area for greasing/awaiting start.
- Receptacles for waste material.
- On site medical evaluation and treatment facilities.



- Seating.
- Suitable containers for swimmers' equipment which is not going on a boat.
- Secure stowage and transportation of items above.
- Toilet facilities and clean drinking water.
- Facilities for providing hot water for flasks.
- Waterproof marking pens/ stamps for marking swimmers with their numbers.
- A suitable area for warm-up.
- Area for final Race Officials' briefing.
- Area for Boat Crew and Safety briefing.
- Suitable crowd control personnel and equipment to keep the water entry point clear.
- Spectator accommodation with clear view of start.
- VIP seating with clear view of start.
- Flagstaff for Host Nation's National flag, Host Association's flag and the FINA flag.
- Display of National flags for all Nations competing.
- Public Address System and Timing Display Equipment.
- Refreshment room for VIPs.

Finish area - The following facilities are to be provided in the vicinity of the finish point:

- A dais for honouring Swimmers.
- National flags of all Nations competing.
- The Host Nation's National flag, the Host Association's flag and the FINA flag.
- Sufficient crowd control personnel and equipment.
- Medical treatment area.
- Media interview area.
- Drug testing rooms.
- Seating arrangements for VIPs and officials.
- Information board giving current race data.
- Facilities for spectators giving clear view of finish.
- Landing facilities for personal equipment.
- Swimmers recovery area
- Provision of swimmers' equipment that had been left in start area.
- Showers and changing facilities.
- Public Address System and Timing Display Equipment.
- Supply of drinks and refreshments for Swimmers, Coaches and Boat Crews and Race Officials.
- Provision of refreshments for officials and VIPs on site.
- Results publication facilities.
- Transport to take swimmers back to accommodation.

7. Start and the Race

An open water swimming event may start with the swimmers standing or treading water in a depth sufficient for them to start swimming on the start signal. Races may also start from a fixed platform – the competitors positions are determined by random draw and they start the race by a dive start.



All starts require the traditional Starter command “Take Your Mark” once the Chief Referee has indicated the handover with his arm and flag outstretched.

Verify with the Chief Referee and Course Officer that the water depths meet the minimum requirements of 1.4m since the swimmers will be directing their visual attention to entering the water safely. The starting lines can vary greatly depending on the race. In water starts may be identified by imaginary lines between two points or actual rope lines (with or without floats) stretched between two buoys or boats in the water. The start line may also be defined by a line stretched over the water. If an actual line is placed in the water, it is recommended that the swimmers line up on the course side of the line so as to minimize the risks of entanglement after the start.

If the total number of competitors exceeds a safe number (which will be determined by the Chief Referee with consultation with the Safety Officer, Course Officer and Meet Director) the race may be started in waves (cohorts). In all National Championship level competition, Men’s and Women’s races are started separately. The men’s will always start first. The appropriate time interval between the men’s start and women’s start will depend on course design. A 5-10 minute stagger usually works well on a 2.5km loop course.

Referees and Race Judges should use their whistle to address any pacing or slipstreaming they observe using the hand signals adopted by FINA to advise the offending swimmers of their need to move apart. If necessary the race number/s can be written on the whiteboard/clipboard and shown to the swimmers to advise those offending.

Only the Referees may disqualify any swimmer in the race, so Race Judges need to inform the Referees of any repeated or continual offending so it can be addressed by the Chief Referee and Referees.

OWS 6.3 is clear in that the rules relating to unsporting behaviour apply equally to the actions of a swimmers handler/coach as to the swimmer. This rule applies in particular to the actions of the Handler/coach and the instructions given to the driver of their escort boat, and also to their actions on the feeding platforms.

The Handler/coach may instruct the swimmer during the race as permitted in OWS 6.13, however this rule does not allow others to enter the course and give instructions to the swimmers during the race.

When conditions or distance indicate, a swimmer must be escorted. As a guide, any event with a course of 10km or more should have escort craft for swimmers. This escort may be by paddler, water ski/canoe, rowing boat or larger powerboat/yacht depending on the safety factors. The difficulties in obtaining reliable escorts, whether they are paddlers or experienced boat captains, are obvious and they are essential to the safe conduct of the meet.

The danger of boats and propellers only a few feet away from swimmers is an added risk. Diesel and petrol (particularly two-stroke) fumes can be dangerous and annoying on still days. Anything that impedes the progress of a swimmer is a consideration when determining the number of escorts you need. You need to establish special rules such as 'no paddlers in the start area, escort boats may not go next to their swimmers for the first 500m', etc. The size and type of each escort is important. You probably do not need the Queen Mary, as this will inhibit the ability to get close to the swimmers but you do need a craft large enough to carry the boat crew, special safety and feeding supplies and the swimmer's coach/handler/representative and the observer/judge.



Paddlers must be sufficiently fit to complete the course. Boats must be capable of running at a very slow speed. Back-up paddlers and boats are mandatory. Boats are required to have the minimal safety equipment as prescribed by Coast Guard regulations. It is also suggested that each escort boat have a whistle to sound and flag to wave in case of emergency. This can also be used if the crew is unsure about the course direction.

Organisers should consider the use of both boats and paddleboards as escorts. The boats support the paddleboards with back-up paddlers, food, and coach for the swimmer. It may be possible, although not always necessary, to have one boat act as a hub for several satellite boats or swimmers.

In the case of Emergency Abandonment, under OWS 6.18.2 where at least 3 hours of the race has been completed, the Chief Referee should use all means at his disposal to quickly and efficiently establish the positions of all swimmers on the course, so that the swimmers can be removed from the water as soon as their relative position in the field has been established.

Where the Chief Referee uses discretion to allow swimmers out of the time limit to complete the course, the results do not record a time or place, but show “OTL”.

Transponders should be issued and received by the Clerk of Course – this also provides a check on the number of swimmers remaining on the water.

Although SW11 prescribes that electronic times are recorded to 1/100th sec, for Open Water events the accuracy of the transponder technology necessitates that times only be recorded to 1/10th sec.

It is important that the Video system is of sufficient resolution and clarity to clearly show the swimmers as they touch the finish plate in slow or stop motion. All aspects of the video system should be checked prior to the event to ensure adequate recording and playback capability is available should it be required including all necessary cables and viewing equipment.

The finish approach needs to be clearly marked so that there can be no confusion as to the course to the finish line.

The finish of the race should be observed by the Finish Judges, Chief Finish Judge and any Referees assigned to watch the finish of the race. Any infractions of the rules should be reported to the Chief Referee by the Chief Finish Judge if observed by the judges, or necessary actions taken to issue an infraction or disqualification if observed by the Referee/s.

8. Sport Technology, Timing & Scoring

A timing system needs to be in place that can cope with the demands of the race. Competitors need to be processed quickly and the results can be produced by hand. In large events, a more sophisticated system may need to be considered. If possible, the timing system and marshals, should have a trial run before the race to iron out any problems. Whatever timing system is used, it should produce a list of competitors on the race day and a further list of results to dispatch to all competitors. A video system that can be used to review the finish needs to include cameras that can cover the finish from multiple angles to overcome any obstruction from other competitors or officials, and be of sufficient resolution to allow easy recognition of Swimmer's race numbers.

Numbering should be done swim tattoo, as the markers could be fading by the end of the competition making it difficult for the referees to identify the swimmers.



For the final ranking family name and given name should be clearly distinguished to easily identify the swimmers.

9. Technical / Team leaders` Meeting

At the Team Leaders Meeting the members of the National Federations receive information about the execution of the competitions. Participation is mandatory for all NFs.

The Team Leaders Meeting will cover the following issues:

- Pre-Competition procedures
 - Flow of athletes/team around the facilities
 - Training procedures
- Competition procedures
 - Warm-up
 - Safety procedures
- Post-competition procedures
 - Victory Ceremonies
 - Press Conferences

The team leaders must check all the given information and the spelling of the athlete's name (first name, last name, date of birth, etc.). No corrections or changes will be allowed after the Team Leaders Meeting.

10. Medical Services and Doping control

Medical Personnel: The recruitment of suitable medical personnel is vital. There are a number of organisations such as the St. John's Ambulance and the Red Cross. Before the event the organiser must ensure the availability of sufficient medical personnel and the local hospitals' emergency departments must be advised. This is compulsory for sea swims. There should be sufficient people to cope with a worst-case scenario particularly if the event is a sea swim or colder water swim, and anticipate more than one incident occurring. It is recommended that a minimum ratio of 2 first aid professional to every 20 competitors be maintained.

Location of Medical Facilities: This is particularly important. They are most likely to be needed on open water swims at the race finish and at high risk points on the race route as well as having basic facilities on the escort boats. Consideration should also be given to providing a fast response boat with medical facilities. These points should be identified by a risk assessment carried out by the race organiser, safety officer and appropriate medical personnel prior to the commencement of the race. All first aid points should be able to communicate with the Emergency Services on a line dedicated solely to medical and emergency communication.

Drug Testing: The relevant National Federation headquarters may notify the event organiser that a nominated Doctor or doping agency will attend the race to conduct drug testing. If this happens, the organiser should provide personnel to assist the doping control staff. The organiser is to arrange an area where the Doctor/doping staff can operate in relative seclusion.



Medical issues

The diversity of open water swimming (OWS) venues demands a broad overview of the requirements for swimmer health and safety. A close relationship between the event organisers and the FINA Technical Open Water Swimming Committee is as critical for medical reasons as it is for the integrity of the course and compliance with FINA minimum competitive criteria.

**These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Open Water Swimming Rules, OWS 1 to 7 as they appear in the FINA Handbook 2017-2021.*

Briefly there are two main areas of medical concern:

- a) Environmental conditions
- b) Swimmer health and safety

The appointment of a Medical Officer (OWS 2) is mandatory and liaison with the Safety Officer is critical (OWS 3.35). The duties of the Medical Officer must be carried out judiciously in accordance with OWS 3.36 in liaison with the Safety Officer and the local Organising Committee. All international events under FINA jurisdiction will carry requirements for doping control. However these are secondary to the concerns for swimmer safety and health and will not be included here. Minimum guidelines for doping control are the responsibility of the FINA Doping Control Review Board (DCRB) and should be considered as an appendix to these Medical Guidelines.

From the outset it must be emphasised that no set of rules will ever supersede the importance of strict, unconditional observation of all swimmers at all times in every event. It is the combined responsibility of all race officials and members of the athlete entourage to remain constantly vigilant to any incident that might jeopardise swimmer safety.

a) Environmental conditions

In accordance with OWS 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 the venue and course is subject to the issue of a certificate of water standard issued by the appropriate local health and safety authority stating that it is fit for purpose. This must be made available to the FINA OWS Technical Officials and Medical Officer before the event can proceed. Local organizers are encouraged to arrange this authority well in advance of the event to ensure that the certificate confirming a water standard acceptable for recreational swimming, as defined by World Health Organization (WHO) standards. Water quality results must be available based upon two samples no sooner than 10 days prior to the event and a third sample performed on the day of the event. The third sample will be relayed to the Medical Officer as soon following the event as possible, indicating if any unforeseen contamination had occurred in the day or hours immediately prior to the event.

Any relevant report compiled by the Medical Officer and Safety Officer must be received by the Chief Referee prior to the start of the event (OWS 3.8).

FINA regulations demand that the venue has a minimum depth of 1.40m (OWS 5.4) and a water temperature of no less than 16C, or greater than 31C recorded at specified times and depths by a designated Commission (OWS 5.5). These temperatures, informed by best available scientific research, have been implemented to protect the health and safety of all competitors and in particular to minimise the potential for hyperthermia and/or hypothermia.



It is recommended that the Safety Officer and Medical Officer ensure the absence of other course hazards including aquatic flora and fauna or the potential for any form of pollution from industrial, biochemical or bacteriological sources (OWS 3.32 and OWS 3.38).

Open water swimmers should be encouraged to apply UVL protection and the organizers should ensure additional protection from natural elements at the conclusion of the event.

b) Swimmer health and safety

If, in the opinion of the Safety Officer and Medical Officer, conditions are unsuitable for the staging of an OWS event the Chief Referee must be informed and recommended modifications to postpone, cancel, or move the event to a more suitable venue must be satisfied to protect the health and safety of all competitors (OWS 3.35).

During the event, the surveillance of swimmers by accompanying craft is mandatory for safety reasons but must comply with race regulations (OWS 6).

Swimmers in obvious distress and those deemed to be incapable of continuing for a variety of reasons should be removed expeditiously from the water and assessed with appropriate urgency by a doctor. Rendering assistance to swimmers in such situations should always supersede official rules of disqualification through "...intentional contact..." with a swimmer (OWS 6.7.1).

Adequate sustenance should be available to swimmers during the event in accordance with OWS 6.13. Swimmers are encouraged to hydrate well, prior to, during and following the event.

A member of the medical staff should be positioned to observe all competitors at the completion of the event and administer medical support as indicated (OWS 7.6).

The provision of an appropriately equipped first aid post and medical centre is mandatory and must be part of the obligations of the Organising Committee (OWS 3.49).

In the event of a medical emergency there must be an adequate system of rapid transfer to secondary or tertiary medical services. This will demand access for motorised ambulance service and clear communication with a receiving hospital (OWS 3.37). A clear protocol of emergency evacuation must be outlined to the FINA Medical Officer at the time of a pre-competition site visit.

❖ Nutrition and Fluid Balance:

Competing in open water swimming events is a major physical effort, for which all swimmers should have adequately trained. Swimmers can expect to be in the water for 2 - 4 hours for events up to 10km and 6 - 8 hours for an event over 25km. It is therefore important to recognise that the body has a finite reserve of carbohydrate and fluid and that the frequent intake of nutritional substances is essential.

It is not appropriate for swimmers to wait until they feel their energy levels decreasing before stopping for nutrition. Rather, swimmers should aim to complete the event with "half a tank full" of energy. This will require frequent stops over the longer events exceeding 25km even though they may feel their energy reserves are adequate.

It is recommended that approximately 200-400mls of a balanced carbohydrate/electrolyte solution are ingested every half hour. This will also help in reducing cramps frequently due to electrolyte depletion. Food may also be taken but this must be in a form that requires little



chewing and facilitates easy ingestion. All food and fluids should be cool, not icy cold in a setting of warm conditions and warm, not hot, in the setting of cold conditions. This will aid the delivery of food from the stomach into the lower digestive tract where the major absorption occurs.

❖ Hypothermia (Lowered Body Temperature):

Prevention of hypothermia is essential. Double bathing caps will also reduce the amount of heat lost through the scalp. As body temperature is reduced, the blood vessels in the skin constrict resulting in greater heat loss through the head and neck rather than through the rest of the body. Ear-plugs decrease the flow of cold water against the ear-drum, reducing the risk of dizziness and problems with orientation. Wool fat (anhydrous lanolin) may be applied as a skin lubricant around the neck, groin and armpit to avoid chaffing.

(Note: Lanolin changes the sensation of cold but does not offer any significant insulation or warming effect. However it does influence heat loss by protecting the integrity of the skin through a reduction in chaffing.)

Nutrition breaks should be brief given that exercise increases skin blood flow,, thereby increasing heat loss balanced by increased muscle activity. But when the swimmer stops, this balance is disrupted. The resultant increased blood flow through the skin enhances heat loss in the absence of heat produced by muscular activity. In young, inexperienced swimmers, prolonged stops may precipitate hypothermia.

It is important to limit the duration of each break to less than 30 seconds to reduce these risks, however this must be balanced by the advantages of adequate breaks for hydration and nutrition replenishment..

Swimmers who begin to feel cold should ingest more food by taking more stops of short duration. Food increases the body temperature because heat is produced by digestion and because the muscles require high levels of nutritional substances for maximum efficiency including heat production.

Escort crews should always be vigilant for the initial signs of hypothermia in their swimmers. Early signs include erratic swimming behaviour,, altered stroke rate and veering off course. At “feeding stops” support staff may recognise subtle uncharacteristic behaviours in swimmers. These include confusion, disorientation, vague slurred responses or complete disregard for coach instructions. Any swimmer unable to raise his/her arms above the head, obey other basic commands or answer simple questions, should be considered “at risk” and retrieved from the water.

It is not within the scope of this document to provide the complete guide to the medical management of hypothermia. However at some events, medical support may be some distance away and it is therefore important for first aid staff to understand fundamental principles. Hypothermic swimmers must be handled gently. They should be dried thoroughly through gentle patting not brisk rubbing, and wrapped in thick insulating blankets. Towels may be wrapped around the scalp and the sides of the neck for added heat retention. Protection from the wind is also essential using whatever shelter is on hand. Warm (not hot) food and fluids should be encouraged frequently in very small amounts. Contrary to common misconception alcohol must never be given to any recovering, cold patient.. Alcohol depresses the central nervous system and accelerates heat loss through the dilatation of surface blood vessels.



A doctor should personally see every swimmer retrieved from the water with symptoms suggestive of hypothermia. This is the point at which the decision is made to implement first aid measures or prepare the swimmer for hospital transfer.

❖ Hyperthermia (elevated body temperature)

Close observation of athletes subjected to warm competitive or training temperatures is critical. While the FINA maximum water temperature for competition is 31C, sun, humidity, air and water flow all affect the ability of the athlete to dissipate heat.

As the athlete's core body temperature rises, the athlete needs to take more frequent feeding breaks, emphasising hydration and electrolytes to offset what is being lost through sweating. Whether cold or overheated, a swimmer will display similar signs and symptoms. These include altered stroke rate, cadence and coordination, as well as confusion and mood changes described earlier. The same simple questions used to assess hypothermia work equally well in hyperthermia. Once again, the presence of these impairments represents ample justification to remove the swimmer from competition.

Cooling and hydration are cornerstones of early management of hyperthermia. Medical evaluation and appropriate intervention is critical in all cases where hyperthermia is suspected..

❖ Exhaustion:

Exhaustion occurs as the result of prolonged energy depletion through inadequate nutritional intake and may be accentuated by the effects of temperature. Hypothermia and hyperthermia may accelerate the onset of fatigue and subsequent exhaustion. The swimmer often presents with the same early signs of confusion, disorientation and erratic mood. The recognition of exhaustion and its management in OWS is similar to that of hypo and hyperthermia and demands the same urgent retrieval of the swimmer.

❖ Pain:

The pain of repetitive activity is frequently experienced by open water swimmers, most commonly in their shoulders and often after about 1 hour of swimming. They may become irritated to the point of becoming abusive but continue to obey commands, answer questions correctly and show no signs of disorientation. Support crews with knowledge of their swimmer will be best to assess this situation and decide upon the outcome...

❖ Sunburn:

Despite being submerged in the water, sunburn is a real risk particularly during long events. In all events UVL protection should be used. It is important to include the area behind the ears, the back, the back of the legs and the bottom of the feet. In very long events in sunny climates, the reapplication of sun block in long events is recommended.

❖ Jellyfish stings:

These may be a general problem but become increasingly more significant for those known to have allergies and extreme sensitivities. Venues with jellyfish populations are generally identified especially where swimmers may have trained locally or have been on-course preparatory to the event. Precautions including the use of lanoline (Wool fat) or Vaseline (petroleum jelly) may help dependent upon the time they remain on the body. The most common symptom of jellyfish stings is the pain. If there are multiple contacts, the pain may be severe and symptoms of nausea and vomiting may develop.



Pain may be moderated by the coolness of the water. Persistent severe pain should be reported to medical staff and treated topically or through specific drug administration. Extensive prolonged jellyfish stinging may present a medical emergency caused by the neurotoxic effect of the sting..

❖ Swallowed salt water:

Salt water is approximately three times more concentrated than the body's internal fluids. Frequent ingestion often in rough, choppy waters, may result in vomiting. Treatment includes reassurance in the first instance and continuing observation. Persistent vomiting will cause significant discomfort and commonly results in voluntary withdrawal. Salt water may also present a severe irritant to the eyes and snug-fitting goggles will minimise this. .

❖ Other Trauma:

Attacks by sharks or other dangerous aquatic fauna are unlikely. A more significant risk however exists from escort boat propellers and extreme care must be taken when manoeuvring near swimmers. Wherever possible motor craft should be fitted with “prop” guards to minimise the risk of danger from this cause.

Medical action plan

The medical action plan must be outlined by the host Medical Officer and discussed with the FINA Medical Delegate at the time of the pre-event site visit. In very general terms this plan should consider: early RECOGNITION of swimmers in difficulty; rapid RESPONSE and RETRIEVAL of the affected swimmer; adequate RESUSCITATION where necessary and REVIEW and REMOVAL to a hospital facility if indicated.

Then Action Plan should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Sufficient personnel and equipment to execute the plan.
- Qualified personnel available on the water to identify and respond immediately to any swimmers in distress.
- A medical receiving site with equipment and trained personnel to ensure evaluation and medical support where necessary for any competitor.
- A detailed evacuation plan for serious medical cases to designated hospitals or medical centres.
- Adequate communication between all Medical staff. This must be a channel or method of communication used only for medical purposes.
- Detailed plans to manage hypothermic or hyperthermic swimmers.
- Sufficient land, water or airborne transportation to ensure the rapid transfer of any casualties from the water or escort boat to a medical team.

In addition, at FINA–designated OWS events there will be an obligation on the host Organising Committee to provide trained staff and adequate facilities to undertake Doping Control in strict accord with FINA Anti-Doping Rules. This function must be the responsibility of additional medical staff and not in any way detract from the requirements for athlete safety as outlined above. Host organisations must understand their responsibilities in this regard and comply accordingly as part of their contract with FINA.



11. Safety and security

Safety is the paramount issue in the organisation and conduct of any open water swimming event. The first step in planning an open water swim is the consideration of all safety factors. Throughout this guide you will find numerous recommendations and suggestions that minimise risks. It's up to the organiser how to implement these into your events.

All events including those of less than 10km require safety support and this is usually provided in the form of kayaks or paddleboards to provide close support to the swimmers around the course, supported by motorised safety craft to evacuate any swimmers removed from the course and requiring medical assessment and support.

The local Red Cross society or St John's Ambulance may be able to provide information, personnel and equipment to assist with the conduct of a meet. Local boat, canoe, rowing, and kayak clubs may also be able to assist. One word of caution: find out, in advance, if there will be any charges associated with their support.

If your event is very long and/or crosses heavily-used shipping lanes, contact the local Harbourmaster. Their main concern is for safety on the water and they can be of great help. One valuable service they are usually able to provide is the notification of ships in the area of the race. They will also provide you with assistance in filling out the necessary permit requests.

If you need help with communications, local amateur radio organisations are helpful and often eager to assist.

Do not try to do it alone. There are any number of volunteer groups and organisations that are willing to assist. Try local Sea and Boy Scouts, Emergency Services Groups, civic groups, local swimming clubs, boat clubs etc. Their public service orientation can really help get jobs done that might otherwise prove unnecessarily expensive.

Don't forget to notify authorities such as local councils, police, hospitals and ambulance services that you are staging an event. You may just require their services and with prior advice they may offer assistance. It is highly advised that organisers have public liability insurance.

12. Accreditation Procedures

The OC is required to implement an accreditation system at the venue of the competition as a security measure:

- a. Accreditation system serves as a control tool for registries and entries into an event, and facilitates integration with onsite security and access control.
- b. The OC must provide the FINA Officials and Delegates, the NFs and the media representatives, and the members of the OC with an accreditation card and ensure that only people with appropriate access rights are allowed to in certain areas of the venue
- c. Accreditation plan must be developed by the OC regarding access and circulation to all areas including parking availability.
- d. Different types of accreditations should be easily distinguished.
- e. Well identified and easy access accreditation area should be placed at the venue.
- f. The OC must provide vests to all accredited photographers and TV crew authorized to access reserved competition.
- g. Photos with the name of the accredited person should be included on the ID cards in order to prevent abuse of use of accreditations.



PART III. Marketing

1.1 General

1.1.1 FINA's long term objective

In support of its long-term objective of the continuous growth of our sports, FINA, together with the National Federations organising meets, will develop a long-term marketing program on both a national and international level, covering all forms of commercial rights including sponsorship, television and radio broadcasting, internet, suppliership, advertising, promotion and licensing.

1.1.2 The Marketing Program

FINA hereby specifically retains the Commercial Rights to the Event as follows: Event Title and Presenting Sponsorship Rights. FINA hereby specifically retains the Commercial Rights of the Product/Service Categories to the Event:

- Timing & data-processing
- Swimwear
- Sportswear/clothing/equipment
- Event logistics
- Racing lanes for swimming, racing lanes for open water swimming, water polo equipment
- Diving boards, diving boards stands and diving board parts and equipment.
- Venue planning & temporary venue structures.

FINA grants to the HMF certain commercial rights to the Event (including any income arising from the exploitation of such rights) limited to sponsorship within the host country of the Event. The HMF shall inform FINA about the contents of the HMF sponsor packages offered to the market and ensure to strictly abide to Clause 8.3 of the staging agreement

1.2 Sponsorship

1.2.1 Concept

The HMF acknowledges that the concept of product exclusivity is essential to the creation and management of a coordinated marketing program for the Series. Thus, it is expressly understood that the rights granted to the HMF in connection with its Marketing Program are exclusive. The NF hereby agrees to ensure that the Event Marks and any other rights granted to them hereunder will not be used by any of the NF Sponsors in such a manner that confusion may arise in the public mind as to the products and/or services for which individuals or companies have been granted the right to use the Event Marks or to exercise any other rights.

1.2.2 Opportunities of sponsorship associations with the FINA OWS events

The following sponsorship associations have been designed by FINA. These associations are differentiated by designation and granted benefits.



Title Sponsor

- Major Commercial Affiliate, with the main commercial rights, including the right to have its name/logo associated with the title of the Series.
- Appointed by FINA.

Series Sponsor

- Appointed by FINA.

Presenting Sponsor

- Local Major Commercial Affiliate not conflicting with Series Sponsors, with the main commercial rights limited within the host country of the event, including the right to have its name/logo associated with the title of the Series.
- Appointed by NF and approved by FINA → approval to be requested at least 2 months before the event.

Official Sponsors

- Commercial Affiliates not conflicting with Series sponsors that aim for exposure and main commercial opportunities in relation to the Series within the host country of the event; may provide cash and products/services to the event.
- Appointed by NF and approved by FINA.

Official Suppliers

- Commercial Affiliates not conflicting with Series sponsors whose principal sponsorship component is to provide products and/or services to the event; will receive exposure limited within the host country of the event.
- Appointed by NF and confirmed by FINA.

1.2.3 Rights Packages

The packages described in 1.4 only reflect the basic rights that a company can be granted by NF. It is the duty of the NF in ensuring that those commercial rights are delivered as granted and are not conflicting with any rights granted to the Series sponsors appointed by FINA.

1.2.4 Definition of product/service category exclusivity

Each NF Sponsor must have allocated to it a defined product/service category. The product category of such a contracted partner is the limited range of defined and specified products and/or services which the party produces and/or provides. These contracted parties will receive the contractual guarantee that they shall be the only company/entity within the host country of the event to have the opportunity to associate the products/services of their defined product category with the NF or the event. The product/service category exclusivity cannot be breached or shared by two unrelated or separate companies within the host country of the event.



1.3 Advertising

1.3.1. Introduction

Advertising is the most important benefit granted to the Commercial Affiliates.

FINA is the sole party responsible for regulating and permitting any advertising at the FINA OWS event venues.

In permitting the presence of advertising at the Event Venues, FINA not only takes into consideration the commercial implications but also the overall look of the Venues, the impact generated by the advertising material and the relationships between the Commercial Affiliates.

The NF hereby agrees that only Commercial Affiliates approved by FINA are permitted to have any form of commercial identification in or at the Venue.

1.3.2 Main advertising material/support

In allowing commercial identification on the following advertising material, FINA aims to assist the Commercial Affiliates to communicate their corporate message to the television audience, media, VIPs and the general public:

- Perimeter advertising boards/other signs of various sizes
- Scoreboard/video board (advertising + PA announcements) – if available
- Backdrops (i.e. mixed zones, the press conference room and behind the award ceremony podium)
- Composite signage towers
- Athletes bibs (worn during awards ceremonies)
- Official publications and other print material
- Official web site.

1.3.3 Procedures for the implementation

Advertising material at the competition pool

Production manufacturer: The production company appointed to produce all advertising boards shall be decided by the NF.

Installation of advertising material: The NF shall ensure that no less than two (2) Working Days prior to the Event, the Production Manufacturer shall have full and unrestricted access to the Venue for the purpose of erecting and supervising the installation of all advertising material of FINA Sponsors and NF Sponsors.

All advertising materials shall be installed/set-up so that it is in place at least one (1) day before the start of the event.

Safety: The NF shall be responsible for ensuring the safety of all advertising boards throughout each meet of the FINA Swimming World Cup by providing adequate security and supervision.

Advertising material in official publications and other print material:

In accordance with the Rights Packages of the Commercial Affiliates, the NF may place the relevant Commercial Affiliates logos on the following material, including but not limited to:

- Tickets



- Programs
- Posters
- Start/Results sheets
- Bulletins
- Flyers
- Maps/Diagrams
- Accreditation cards
- Press releases
- Other official printed material

The FINA sponsors' logos shall be placed in all print materials related to the event, in a prominent position.

Approval of print material

All print materials shall be sent beforehand to FINA for prior approval. The layouts shall be submitted for approval as soon as possible but not later than 1 month before the start of each year's Event Series.

Scoreboard / Video board (if any)

FINA Sponsors and NF Sponsors will be entitled to advertise on the scoreboard/video board located in the competition pools using their name and/or logo, designation, or advertisement. No other advertising shall be permitted except as previously approved in writing by FINA.

Each FINA Sponsor and NF Sponsor is responsible for providing "ready to use" material at its own cost. Advertisements may contain text, sound and/or music. The FINA Sponsors and NF Sponsors will receive this right free of charge.

The videos shall generally be shown in alphabetical order after the Title Sponsor and shall take into account the hierarchy between the categories of sponsorship. In addition, Title and Series Partner may be shown twice as much as the other sponsorship categories (Presenting Sponsor, Official Sponsors and Official Suppliers). The NF will seek approval of FINA before ultimately deciding the order of all advertisements shown on the scoreboard/video board.

Commercial messages on the scoreboard/video board cannot be shown when an event is in progress, but only before and after each competition session.

Advertising boards

A minimum number of boards have to be provided for the sponsors as mentioned in paragraph 1.4.2 and as proposed in main TV configuration as well as one (1) central board for FINA advertising.



1.4 Right packages guidelines

1.4.1 Title Sponsor (FINA Sponsor)

Obligations of the host Federation:

1. General obligations :

- use the official title of the Series;
- ensure that no entity that is a competitor of Title Sponsor shall have any rights of association or exposure at the Event.

2. Advertising signage/Recognition at the venue which may include the following:

- two (2) or more advertising signs around the start, finish and along the course in the view of the main TV camera. The HMF/OC shall pay the production cost of such signs according to the artwork to be supplied by FINA;
- provide multiple identification on any awards backdrop, TV Interview/Press Conference, flash interview/mixed zone backdrop including one as part of the official event title;
- provide FINA Title Sponsor with identification on any other signage produced for the Event;
- use the flags/inflatable as provided by FINA Title Sponsor for the Event competition pool;

NB: all mentioned sizes are to be understood as the sizes of the logo covering the advertising sign; e.g. the logo shall cover the whole surface of the sign.

3. Print materials :

- provide FINA Title Sponsor with two (2) pages (four colors) free of charge in the official program of the Event; with one (1) page for a company welcome message, and one (1) page for advertisement + include one (1) FINA Title Sponsor mark on the composite page, if any;
- include the official event logo and the FINA Title Sponsor on all printed materials connected with the Event, including by way of example: accreditations, posters, flyers, tickets, programs, bulletins, start/results sheets and the like.

4. Other rights :

- play the 30-second commercial on the Event venue video-screen before and after each day's competition sessions;
- ensure that FINA Title Sponsor can fly company flags (maximum dimension 2m²) at the Event venue free of charge;
- ensure that the Host Broadcaster of the Event provides FINA Title Sponsor with an exclusive first right to negotiate the purchase of broadcast sponsorship and commercial airtime before, during and after the broadcast of the Event;
- display the FINA Title Sponsor marks on the official event website. A hyperlink will be included from the event website to the company website;
- provide FINA Title Sponsor, if requested, with space free of charge, at or close to the Event venue for FINA Title Sponsor to organise private hospitality at its own cost. The costs of any other infrastructure and utilities shall be borne by FINA Title Sponsor;



- provide FINA Title Sponsor with up to thirty (30) best-seated tickets for each competition session, free of charge;
- provide FINA Title Sponsor with the first opportunity to purchase additional tickets at face value;
- provide FINA Title Sponsor, if requested, with a reasonable number of VIP and service accreditation passes for the Event;
- provide FINA Title Sponsor, if requested, with a reasonable number of parking passes at or close to the venue, free of charge;
- permit FINA Title Sponsor, if requested, to stage a press conference at the Event venue, and to participate in any official press conferences of the Event;
- permit FINA Title Sponsor to distribute information/press packs to the media at the Event;
- ensure that FINA Title Sponsor may distribute promotional items/premiums at the Event venue, free of charge or at a subsidized price;
- permit FINA Title Sponsor, if requested, to run activities at the Event venue to engage the spectators or Event participants;
- provide FINA Title Sponsor with a reasonable number of invitations to any social function or official dinner organised at the Event;
- permit FINA Title Sponsor representatives to participate in any award ceremonies.

1.4.2 Series Sponsor / Official Timekeeper (FINA Sponsors)

In the event FINA appoints a company for the Swimwear category (including Merchandising & Licensing rights), the below rights should be reserved:

1. General obligations:

- use the official title of the Series: the FINA Swimming World Cup;
- ensure that no entity that is a competitor of Company Name shall have any rights of association or exposure at the Event.

2. Advertising signage/Recognition at the venue:

- provide Company Name with one (1) advertising signs around the start, finish and along the course in the view of the main TV camera. The HMF/OC shall pay the production cost of such signs according to the artwork to be supplied by FINA;
- provide multiple identification on any awards backdrop, TV Interview/Press Conference, flash interview/mixed zone backdrop including one as part of the official event title;
- provide Company Name with identification on any other signage produced for the Event;
- NB: all mentioned sizes are to be understood as the sizes of the logo covering the advertising sign; e.g. the logo shall cover the whole surface of the sign.

3. Print materials :

- provide Company Name with one (1) advertisement page (four colors) free of charge in the official program of the Event + include one (1) Company Name mark on the composite page;



- include the Company Name logo on all printed materials connected with the Event (under the designation of “Official Sponsor of the Event”), including by way of example: accreditations, posters, flyers, tickets, programs, bulletins, start/results sheets and the like.
4. Other rights:
- play the 30-second commercial of Company Name on the Event venue video-screen before and after each day’s competition sessions;
 - ensure that Company Name can fly company flags at the Event venue free of charge;
 - ensure that the Host Broadcaster of the Event provides Company Name with an exclusive first right to negotiate the purchase of broadcast sponsorship and commercial airtime before, during and after the broadcast of the Event;
 - display the Company Name marks on the official event website. A hyperlink will be included from the event website to the Company Name website;
 - provide Company Name, if requested, with space free of charge, at or close to the Event venue for Company Name to organise private hospitality at its own cost. The costs of any other infrastructure and utilities shall be borne by Company Name;
 - provide Company Name with up to ten (10) best-seated tickets for each competition session, free of charge;
 - provide Company Name with the first opportunity to purchase additional tickets at face value;
 - provide Company Name, if requested, with a reasonable number of VIP and service accreditation passes for the Event;
 - provide Company Name, if requested, with a reasonable number of parking passes at or close to the venue, free of charge;
 - permit Company Name, if requested, to stage a press conference at the Event venue, and to participate in any official press conferences of the Event;
 - permit Company Name to distribute information/press packs to the media at the Event;
 - ensure that Company Name may distribute promotional items/premiums at the Event venue, free of charge or at a subsidized price;
 - provide Company Name, if requested, with space at the venue, free of charge, for the display, promotion and/or sale of company products. The costs of any other infrastructure and utilities shall be borne by Company Name;
 - permit Company Name, if requested, to run activities at the Event venue to engage the spectators or Event participants;
 - provide Company Name with a reasonable number of invitations to any social function or official dinner organised at the Event;
 - permit Company Name representatives to participate in any award ceremonies including those related to the World Records at the Event.



1.4.3 Presenting Sponsor (NF Sponsor)

Marks / Designations

- Presenting Sponsorship
 - Company Name incorporated into event title, under the following form exclusively:
FINA Marathon Swim World Series – [City] [Year], presented by [Sponsor]
 - Company name promoted together with the official title at all times within the host country of the event—in official print material, on-screen graphics, newspapers, etc.
 - Right to use of all Official Event Marks for promotion, advertising, sales purposes within the host country of the event.

Exclusivity

- Product category exclusivity within the host country of the event

Product supply

- Right to exclusively supply Company's product/services for use by the FINA Marathon Swim World Series organisers within the host country of the event

Advertising Boards / Signs

- Advertising signage
 - Minimum. number of boards to be secured for FINA sponsors as mentioned in paragraph 1.4.2 and as proposed in main TV configuration + 1 central board for FINA advertising to be secured. The remaining boards are available for NF Presenting Sponsors, Official Sponsors and Official Suppliers.
 - Other signage opportunity to be determined by NF and approved beforehand by FINA.
- Standing composite boards: Company name/logo displayed on standing composite boards to be positioned at the Championships Venues, hotels, social functions and other areas to be defined within the host country of the event
- The visibility of the Presenting Sponsor shall not be greater than that of the Title Sponsor

Television/Press/Internet

- Commercial airtime, 30 second spots (where available) at Company's cost
- Flash interview / Mixed Zone backdrop
 - Company name / logo on backdrop board in media flash interview / mixed zone area (composite)
- Press conference
 - Identification on press conference backdrop (composite)
 - Opportunity to distribute corporate literature at the Venue
- Banner on home page of the official event website
 - Link to Company home page
 - Opportunity to purchase ad banners on the FINA website



Print materials

- Company name on official poster
- Company name / logo to appear on all official print material (program, accreditation card, tickets, start and results sheets, etc.).
- 1 advertising page in official program.

1.4.4 Official Sponsor / Supplier (NF Sponsor)

Marks / Designations

- Company has the right to use all official Marks of the FINA Marathon Swim World Series, for promotional, advertising and sales purpose within the host country of the event only.
- The right to use the official Designation, i.e. "The Official Sponsor of the FINA Marathon Swim World Series – [City] [Year]" on promotional items, advertising, products, etc.

Exclusivity

- Product category exclusivity within the host country of the event

Product supply

- Right to supply exclusively Company's product/services for use by the FINA Marathon Swim World Series organisers in a manner to be determined by NF within the host country of the event

Advertising Boards / Signs

- Minimum number of boards to be secured for FINA sponsors as mentioned in paragraph 1.4.2 and as proposed in main TV configuration. The remaining boards are available for NF Presenting Sponsors, Official Sponsors and Official Suppliers
 - Other signage opportunity to be determined by NF and approved beforehand by FINA.
- Standing composite boards: Company name/logo displayed on standing composite boards to be positioned at the Venues, hotels, social functions and other areas to be defined within the host country of the event.
- The visibility of the Official Sponsor/Supplier shall not be greater than that of the Title Sponsor

Television/Press/Internet

- Commercial airtime, 30 second spots (where available) at Company's cost
- Flash interview / Mixed Zone backdrop
 - Company name / logo on backdrop board in media flash interview / mixed zone area
- Press conference
 - Identification on press conference backdrop as per Appendix 5 (composite)
 - Opportunity to distribute corporate literature
- Banner on home page of official event website



- Link to Company home page
- Opportunity to purchase ad banners on the FINA website

Print materials

- Company name on official poster
- Company name / logo to appear on all official print material (program, accreditation card, tickets, start and results sheets, etc).
- One half advertising page in official program.

1.5 Standard look of the FINA Open Water Venues

One of the main goals of the new format of the FINA Marathon Swim World Series is to have a standard format and look of the venues to make the event instantly recognizable as part of the Series.

As part of this standardization, FINA will provide the following standard templates to be used by all Host Federations/OC which will be available on the FINA platform: <http://www.fina-brand.com>



PART IV. Video and Broadcast Coverage

1. For event with or without a Live TV production obligations

- a) Video-Screen Coverage – FINA strongly recommends that the event organisers use cameras to provide a live video feed to one or more video-screens positioned at key points at the venue, to allow for spectators to follow the races better. This video feed will complement the audio commentary of the races relayed via the public address system at the venue. In addition to the race coverage, the cameras can also be used for interviews with event participants.
- b) Local Broadcast Coverage – FINA strongly recommends that the event organisers encourage the participation of local TV and media platforms to cover the event for their own viewers. Event organisers should facilitate their participation by providing relevant accreditation and access at the event venue.
- c) Provision of Broadcast Quality Footage to FINA – In order to enable FINA to compile event video reports for social media and other broadcast use, event organisers must provide FINA with broadcast quality footage in high definition, in a digital format, to be delivered to FINA as soon as possible after the event, either as digital files on a HDD, or by means of file transfer. A minimum of 30 minutes of unedited footage should be provided, however more is always better. The following are of particular importance:
 - ❖ Pre-event athlete/coach interviews
 - ❖ Swimmer pre-race presentations
 - ❖ Race start
 - ❖ Race action - e.g. turns, intermediate points, feeding station, yellow/red cards, sprint to finish
 - ❖ Race finish and post-race athlete celebrations
 - ❖ Venue/course scenic & crowd shots
 - ❖ Awards ceremony
 - ❖ Post-race athlete/coach interviews

2. For event with a Live TV production obligations

Production of Live Broadcast Coverage – FINA requires that the event organiser appoints a proficient broadcasting/production company to provide continuous live coverage of the races, with the signal starting at least 10 minutes prior to the presentation of the swimmers, and ending at least 10 minutes after the end of the medal ceremony. The event organiser shall provide the coverage to FINA by means of an RMTH H.264 format live stream, via an internet connection streaming at a minimum of 5MBPS, or in accordance with FINA's other technical specifications.

FINA can provide its standard opening and closing title sequences, as well as a replay swipe for the transition between live action and replays, for use by the appointed broadcaster in its production.



PART V. Communication & Promotional Activities

1. Event promotion - pre-event, during and after

To ensure an optimal promotion and exposure of the event, local and national media should be alerted for the competition at least three months before the event.

The main milestones to be taken into account should include:

3 months prior to event:

- Organisation of a Press Conference to announce the date, location and competition programme of the event. Local organisers should run this Press Conference and inform the media accordingly;

1 month prior to event:

- Press Release highlighting the competition and, if possible, mentioning some stars attending the event. A quote from a local athlete, or from the OC organisers would be desirable;

1 week prior to event:

- Press Release with the confirmed athletes taking place in the event;
- Electronic distribution of a Press kit with some facts around the competition: history, past winners, complete venue map, rules of the competition, stars' biographies;

2 days prior to event:

- Organisation of a Press Conference to "open" the event. Should be invited: the FINA representative on site, the local and OC authorities, two stars (one local and one international);

During the event:

- Press Release with the daily highlights;
- Quotes of the best athletes;
- Results;
- Action + award ceremonies photos.

If possible, and taking in to account the number of media representatives during the race, media boat(s) can be provided for journalists and photographers to follow the event closer to the athletes.

After the event:

- Complete Press Kit, with all the material produced for the event.

From the FINA side, international media will receive the necessary information throughout the FINA communication channels: Press Releases, Newsletter, Social Media and Website.

2. Website

All efforts must be done to ensure an online presence of the event. A local website may be created, displaying all the relevant information and news about the competition. Moreover, this



online tool must also provide practical details to athletes and National Federations taking part in the race.

Finally, a regular exchange of data, news, photos and any meaningful material with the FINA official website is recommended.

3. Social media platforms

Regular posts on social media platforms are an excellent way to enhance the promotion and visibility of the event.

News, facts & figures, history, curiosities on athletes, short video clips, photos, quotes or statistical data are examples of information to be posted on social media.

The social media strategy should be coordinated between local Organisers and FINA. Organisers are encouraged to use the FINA official hashtags for the event.



PART VI. Sports Presentation

Sport Presentation is a fundamental element of the event. It encompasses the look, sound and feel of the event and aims to create an exciting and energetic atmosphere for the spectators. The Sport Presentation team is responsible for controlling all of the event production elements that go in around the sport at the venue. They control the entrance of the athletes, the music, the video and scoreboard content, entertainment and the medal ceremony.

A good Sport Presentation program can draw more spectators, sponsors, and commercial interest.

1. Key Elements

Implementation of the Sport Presentation program at any event can be difficult. Adequate resources must be allocated to ensure that a Sport Presentation plan is appropriately put in place. Elements that contribute to an effective and appealing Sport Presentation plan include:

- Announce and presenters;
- Music;
- Entertainment;
- Sound System;
- Introducing Athletes and Officials;
- Scoreboards / Digital Boards
- Video Boards
- Graphics and Video Production;
- Communication;
- Venue Look.

Due to the characteristics of the sport it is difficult for the spectators and also for the coaches to follow the race, therefore it important that the announcer provides a frequent update of the status of the competition in English language.

2. Awarding Ceremony

The awarding ceremony serves to celebrate the winners and as the conclusion of the race. Both the medal presenters and the swimmers must be aware of the venue and timing of the ceremony. A script for the announcer is also recommended.





Technical requirements:

- Backdrop, according to FINA marketing guidelines
- Podium
- Poles for the national flags
- Medals, gifts or flowers and prize money cheque
- FINA and national anthems
- Cordon for photographers, spectators.



PART VII. Rules and Regulations

Rules regarding the conduct of Open Water Swimming events are covered in a number of places, and a check should be made of the FINA Website prior to competitions to ensure the current versions of all Rules, Bylaws and Regulations are referenced.

Rules and Regulations to be adhered to:

- ✓ FINA Bylaws - Detailed policies outlining the implementation of specific regulations and policies adopted by FINA
- ✓ FINA Open Water Swimming Rules
- ✓ FINA Medial Rules
- ✓ FINA Marathon Swim World Series Rules and Regulations including MP Events
- ✓ FINA UltraMarathon Swim Series Rules and Regulations

FINA Rulebook

- Constitutional Rules – set out the structure and governance of FINA
- General Rules – apply to all disciplines within FINA
- Technical Rules – cover the technical elements of competition related to a specific discipline, including Open Water Swimming (OWS Rules) and Masters rules covering OWS events for Masters competitions
- Medical Rules – covering rights and health of athletes, and general principles of medical ethics

Rules are approved by the General and Technical Congresses of FINA in which all Federations participate. Bylaws and Regulations are approved by the FINA Bureau.



APPENDIX 1. Safety Regulations

1. GENERAL CONCEPTS

1.1 These regulations shall apply to all open water events of a distance of 5km or greater organized by FINA, sanctioned by FINA, or over which FINA has technical control ("Covered Competitions"). These regulations shall augment the FINA Open Water Swimming Rules and Regulations and shall augment and supersede as applicable, the existing regulations established for specific events (e.g., FINA Open Water Marathon Swim World Series and FINA UltraMarathon Swim Series regulations).

1.2 Critical elements of these regulations include:

- Submission of a site-specific safety plan compliant with these regulations as part of the event approval process;
- Approval of that safety plan by a FINA TOWSC Safety Representative as a condition of event approval;
- Appointment of a FINA Safety Delegate who is independent of the Host Member Federation and Organizing Committee ("HMF/OC") to ensure that the approved safety plan and the requirements of these regulations are implemented on race day;
- Authority vested in anyone of the FINA Safety Delegate, the HMF/OC Safety Officer, or the Chief Referee to postpone, cancel, or modify an event where safety conditions warrant;
- Careful accounting for all swimmers before, during and after the race to ensure that all swimmers starting the race are accounted for at the time they withdraw or finish the race;
- **All** swimmers must be observed during the race so that there is immediate recognition when a swimmer is struggling or loses consciousness;
- There must be immediate rescue available when a swimmer is in distress; and
- There must be immediate resuscitation available to address medical emergencies.

2. SUBMISSION OF A SAFETY PLAN TO FINA

2.1 For all Covered Competitions, the HMF/OC for the competition shall submit a site-specific safety plan to FINA for FINA's approval. That safety plan shall comply with all requirements of these regulations.

2.2 Each safety plan shall be reviewed by the FINA TOWSC Safety Representative, who shall approve, modify, or reject the submitted safety plan.

2.3 No Covered Competition subject to these regulations shall be sanctioned or approved by FINA without an approved safety plan in place.

2.4 Any change to an approved safety plan requested up until five days before the race must be approved by the FINA TOWSC Safety Representative as provided in Article 2.2 above. Changes to an approved safety plan necessitated by circumstances beyond the control of the HMF/OC requested within five days of the race, or otherwise required to protect



participant safety, may be approved by the FINA Safety Delegate appointed by FINA for the race.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAFETY PLAN AT THE COMPETITION

- 3.1 Concurrently with the awarding of an event, FINA shall appoint a FINA Safety Delegate for each Covered Competition. The FINA Safety Delegate shall be independent of the HMF/OC. The FINA Safety Delegate shall be generally responsible for all matters pertaining to the safety of the competition participants and shall be specifically responsible for ensuring that the approved safety plan and these regulations are followed during the competition.
- 3.2 The HMF/OC shall appoint an HMF/OC Safety Officer with experience in open water safety and an HMF/OC Safety Committee responsible for organizing and implementing all safety aspects of the competition. The HMF/OC Safety Committee shall include certified local lifeguards with experience in open bodies of water who shall be involved in safety during the competition.
- 3.3 The FINA Safety Delegate shall inspect the competition venue and meet with the HMF/OC Safety Delegate and Safety Committee at least three days prior to the scheduled start of the competition to ensure that the safety plan remains adequate to address the conditions at the competition venue and that all actions necessary to implement the approved safety plan have been taken.
- 3.4 The FINA Safety Delegate shall have authority to modify, postpone, or cancel the competition whenever the approved safety plan is not being implemented or as otherwise required to protect the safety of participants. The HMF/OC Safety Officer and the Chief Referee of the race may advise the FINA Safety Delegate on the modification, postponement or cancellation of the competition.

4. SPECIFIC SAFETY PLANS AND RACE SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Each safety plan required by these regulations shall include the following minimum requirements. The implementation of these requirements is mandatory for each Covered Competition.

4.1 Technical Meeting

- (a) Athlete representatives must attend the Technical Meeting. If a swimmer or the swimmer's representative is unable to attend the Technical Meeting, the swimmer must attend a special safety briefing in order to participate in the race.
- (b) Safety topics that shall be included in the Technical Meeting include:
- explanation of the course layout and hazards
 - tides, currents or other water conditions
 - marine life
 - weather conditions
 - water temperature
 - water quality conditions



- description of the method by which the Safety Committee will monitor swimmers
 - location of safety craft
 - description of medical support onsite and availability of hospital care
 - signal for help-float on back and raise hand for assistance
 - evacuation plan for clearing the race course, including description of related visual and audible signals
- (c) A short pre-race safety briefing, mandatory for all swimmers, shall be held immediately prior to the race.

4.2 Monitoring And Rescue of Swimmers

- (a) Each swimmer shall be under the direct observation of at least one HMF/OC Safety Committee member or Referee at all times during the race. The configuration of the course will determine where Safety Committee observers are positioned to observe swimmers. For example, in an open race course with no physical restraints, and depending on the size of the field, it is ideal to have an escort craft with a designated observer assigned to assure that each swimmer is monitored. However, in a competition conducted in a narrow rowing basin, it would be impractical to have individual escort craft on the race course, rather, HMF/OC Safety Committee observers may be able to follow the swimmers by walking along the shore. In other circumstances, it may be desirable to organize the HMF/OC Safety Committee observers by zone.

Whenever possible, given the layout of the race course, HMF/OC Safety Committee observer craft (boats or kayaks) should guarantee that all swimmers separated from the lead group or lead swimmer can be followed directly by a safety boat or kayak. The safety craft must follow the swimmer or group of swimmers at a reasonable distance so as to allow immediate intervention if a safety action is required.

- (b) There must be sufficient safety craft or escort craft located on the course to immediately recognize when a swimmer is in distress and to initiate an immediate rescue response after observation or notification that a swimmer's rescue is required. In most course configurations, there should also be stationary safety craft located every 400 meters along the course, with a CPR- and life support-trained responder on board. To accomplish this, there must be sufficient designated rescue landing points along the course and sufficient CPR- and life support-trained personnel in proximity to each swimmer or group of swimmers.

4.3 Safety Communication

- (a) The FINA Safety Delegate and the HMF/OC Safety Officer must have instant two-way communication access with: each other; all members of the HMF/OC Safety Committee assigned to observe swimmers; all safety craft; personnel on each feeding platform; the HMF/OC Chief Medical Officer; the Chief Referee; and other course officials. The line of command shall be as follows: the FINA Safety Delegate deals directly with the HMF/OC Safety officer and the HMF/OC Safety Officer deals directly and shall have the absolute power to mobilize all lifeguards and medical personnel when required.



- (b) Safety Committee members assigned to monitor swimmers must also be able to instantly communicate with all safety craft.
- (c) Two-way radios or other communication equipment with one channel or number reserved for emergencies are required, and a backup system shall also be available.

4.4. Accounting for Swimmers

- (a) Each swimmer shall have his or her race number marked clearly on his or her body. The Clerk of the Course is responsible for the accountability of all competitors from the start of the race until the last competitor has safely completed the race. As swimmers withdraw from or finish the race, the Clerk of the Course shall check off each swimmer from the list of swimmers who started the race.
- (b) No swimmer shall exit the race through withdrawal, disqualification, completion, or otherwise-without checking in with the Clerk of the Course.
- (d) All swimmers should wear when available whatever electronic tracking technology may be required as part of the approved safety plan.

4.5 Feeding Stations

- (a) For Covered Competitions greater than five kilometres, a floating or stationary feeding station should be available at least every 2.5 kilometres.

4.6 Local Suitability Certificate, Including Water Quality

- (a) The course shall be in water that is subject to only minor currents or tides and shall be free of hazardous obstacles, pollutants, and dangerous marine life.
- (b) A certificate of suitability for the use of the venue shall be issued by the appropriate local health and safety authorities. In general, the certification must relate to water purity and to physical safety from other considerations. The certificate provided in connection with plan approval shall be updated within seventy-two hours of the day of the race.

4.7 Water Temperature

- (a) The water temperature shall be measured 2 hours before the start of the race and must be a minimum of 16°C and a maximum of 31°C. The water temperature shall be certified by the FINA Safety Delegate and the HMF/OC Safety Officer as measured in the middle of the course, at a depth of 40 centimetres.
- (b) The water temperature shall be monitored as provided above at one-hour intervals during the race. If the water temperature drops below 16°C or exceeds 31°C at anyone of the measuring intervals, the water temperature shall be measured again in 30 minutes and if that measurement is also below 16°C or exceeds 31°C, the race must be stopped.

4.8 Medical Service

- (a) The HMF/OC shall appoint as its Chief Medical Officer a physician with experience in providing medical care during endurance events. Other members of the HMF/OC medical team shall include sufficient individuals with emergency



medical training (basic life support and CPR) to staff the stationary safety boats and venue medical facility.

- (b) The onsite medical facility shall include basic emergency and trauma equipment, AED, and any heating or cooling facilities required by the approved safety plan.
- (c) An ambulance shall be available onsite or on call within five minutes of the venue. A back-up ambulance shall also be available onsite or on call within 15 minutes of the venue.
- (d) Where the travel time by ambulance between the venue and the nearest hospital with emergency room facilities is longer than one hour, then the safety plan shall require provision for helicopter transport.

4.9 Safety During Training. Pre-Race Warm Up And Post-Race Warm Down

- (a) The HMF/OC must provide safety monitoring on the course during established training hours. No swimmer shall be allowed to enter the race course during training without an escort craft. Monitoring of swimmers by HMF/OC Safety Committee observers should also occur during pre-race warm ups and post-race warm downs.

4.10 Course Evacuation Plan

- (a) Each safety plan must include a course evacuation plan to quickly get all swimmers and race personnel off the water and to safety in emergency situations.

5. NO FINISH REQUIREMENT

- 5.1 No swimmer shall receive points or prize money for a race that the swimmer does not finish. However, notwithstanding any other rule to the contrary, there shall be no requirement for a swimmer to finish any particular race to which these regulations apply (including those that are a part of the FINA Marathon Swim World Series and FINA UltraMarathon Swim Series) in order to receive final point standings or prize money in the series.



APPENDIX 2. Event Checklist

OPEN WATER SAFETY CHECK SHEET

Venue:

Date:/...../..... Time:am /pm

Car park, boat ramp, any possible obstructions in and out:

.....
.....
.....
.....

CONDITIONS	Ambient Temperature:	Water Temperature:
Time:		
Time:		
Time:		

Wind conditions:

Overall weather conditions: (to include expected/possible changes during event)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Tidal conditions: High Tide: Low Tide:

Swell conditions expected:

Minimum water depth on course:

Course Bottom Material:

Jelly fish:	<u>Spotted</u> -	Y/N	N/A
	<u>Expected</u> -	Y/N	N/A
	<u>Products to treat available</u> -	Y/N	N/A



Lifeguards:

Club:	# Qualified	# Unqualified

Radio Contact:

Radios – number: Last charged: Last checked:

Frequency channels – number: Set at:

Emergency Channel:

Is radio contact available to Lifeguards, Coast Guard, Harbour Master etc. Y/N

Radios issued to :

Role	Who	Y/N	Channel
Chief Referee			
Referees			
Safety Officer			
Safety Staff			
Course officer			
Judges			
Medical Officer			
Others:			



Mobile telephone number(s) of:

Role	Names	Ph Number
Referee(s):		
Safety Officer:		
Safety staff:		
Course Officer:		
Medical Officer		
Driver/s:		
Other(s):		

Number of Competitors:

	Senior Male:	Senior Female:	Junior Male:	Junior Female:
Entered:				
Reported				
Exit Water				

Medical Cover:

Doctor(s):

First Aid Organisation(s):



Officials:

Chief Referee(s):

Referee(s):

Safety Officer:

Course Officer:

Judges: Race

Turn

Finish

Chief Timekeeper(s):

Timekeepers:

Clerk(s) of Course:

Recorder(s):

Any other specific requirements or arrangements (to include anything pertaining to the public – carry forward to separate sheet if necessary but note on this form):

NOTE:.....

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.....

Event considered to be safe to go ahead (if no provide reasons): Y/N

.....

.....

.....

Referee(s):

Safety Officer:

Course Officer:



Infraction Report / DQ Form

EVENT NAME:	Date:...../...../.....
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INFRACTION REPORT

EVENT 5K 10K 25K Other:Km

MEN WOMEN TEAM EVENT

<input type="radio"/> MEN	Time:	Description
<input type="radio"/> WOMEN	<input type="radio"/> Red Card	Swimmer N°..... Name FED:
	<input type="radio"/> Yellow Card	
	<input type="radio"/> Withdrawals	
	FINA RULE / Bylaw applied	

OFFICIAL'S NAME SIGNATURE:

REFEREE'S NAME SIGNATURE:

Fedn advised:	
Name:	SIGNATURE:
Time:	



Reason(s):

Referee Signature

Date

Time

 am / pm

Decision Accepted:

Yes

No

Referred to Jury of Appeal:

Yes

No

**Name of person receiving decision
(Swimmer / Team Official / Swimmer's Representative)**

Signature

Jury of Appeal Decision:

Jury of Appeal Signature

Date

Time

 am / pm