



## **Workbook**

**For**

## **Open Water Referee**

Briefing notes

Candidate Name.....

Club.....

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the final level of formal British Swimming technical official qualification within the discipline of Open Water swimming. You will be studying to become a British Swimming Open Water referee

British Swimming thanks you for the time and service you have already given to the sport and hope that you gain both enjoyment and fulfilment through continuing to train and improve as a Open Water official. It is only through the commitment of you and of others that competition at all levels can take place.

As part of your registration for the Open Water referee course, you will be allocated a experienced referee to act as your mentor to guide you through the process. You will be expected to study these notes, know the FINA rules, understand the guidance given on the application of these rules and work through the questions both individually and with your mentor. The course lasts throughout the open water season. You must register in the spring and will be expected to attend a range of events during the summer, this will enable you to gain experience and build on the knowledge you gain by studying the workbook. The course ends in November when you sit a written examination. If you are successful in achieving the pass mark you will be placed on the final phase of qualification which consists of two practical assessments during which you will be appointed to act as a referee at two major events.

To pass the Open Water referees' examination a candidate requires not only a thorough knowledge of FINA Law and Technical Rules but also a level of experience which will permit the application of the rules with a solid base of 'common sense'. Not all circumstances have a ready made rule; that is why we need referees.

This booklet is not intended to be a definitive guide to passing the examination. In conjunction with the FINA Technical Rules/Laws it will assist the candidate to achieve a pass grade.

The written examination will be a written paper of 90 minutes duration preceded by 10 minutes reading time. It will relate to all aspects of the role of referee.

The practical assessment will be in two parts at different venues. You will be expected to carry out all of the duties of the referee under the supervision of two of the British Swimming referee assessors. You will be expected to take on the role of the referee and control the race in all aspects, besides the race itself you will assume responsibility for the referee roles in pre-race setup, briefings, post race determination and preparation of results and overall safety throughout. You will be in charge and the supervisors will only step in if things are going wrong and you are not coping safely. This ultimate test sounds scary, but you should find that you have the correct experience and the ability to take charge of the whole event, in which case you will find the assessment very satisfying.

# Record of Progress

## Open Water referee candidate

<b>Reg/Dist</b>		<b>Authorised Signature:</b>			
<b>Name:</b>				<b>Reg No:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>				<b>Club</b>	
				<b>Tel:</b>	
<b>Post Code:</b>				<b>Mobile:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>					
No.	Workshop Sessions	Date	Mentor	Co-Ordinator/Referee	
1	<b>Introduction seminar</b> <span style="color: red;">To be taken soon after registering for the OW referees course, certainly before the first events of the season.</span>				
	<b>Comments</b>				
2	<b>Examination session.</b> Build on the experience gained during the summer and prepare for the written examination. Can be more than one session				
	<b>Comments</b>				
3	<b>Workbook Completion Session</b> (On completion of Duties Form)				
	<b>Comments</b>				
<b>Examination result</b>		<b>PASS</b>		<b>FAIL</b>	
General Comments of Mentor           Signed:					

# Record of Duties

## Open Water Referee candidate

Name: .....

	EVENT/SESSION	DATE	DUTY	level of event	MENTOR SIGNATURE	REFEREE SIGNATURE	Referee Reg. No.
1			Referee				
2			Referee				
3			Chief Judge				
4			Chief Judge				
5			Recorder				
6			Clerk of the course				
7			Shadow safety officer				
8			Course officer				
9							
10							

- Notes:
- 1 Your Mentor or the referee at the event shall sign to indicate that duties were carried out successfully.
  - 2 Any duty that has already been performed and can be verified should be signed of at the beginning of the season by your mentor.
  - 3 Where possible all duties should be covered but it is not essential, the test for an Open Water referee is a pass at the written examination plus two successful practical assessments. Mentors should ensure that candidates are sufficiently prepared for these.

# Syllabus

## **Safety Laws**

*Safety requirements.*

*Promoter responsibilities.*

*Referee's duties.*

*Appointed officials' responsibilities.*

## **General Competition Rules**

*The application of ASA/SAS/WASA Laws, Rules and FINA Rules to competitions in Great Britain.*

*Gala advertisements.*

*Advertising and Television*

*Promoters conditions.*

*First Claim*

*Rights of a competitor to participate*

- *registration of competitors.*
- *unregistered swimmers.*
- *competition by children*

*Open competitions.*

*Mixed competitions*

*Masters competitions*

*Prizes and Trophies*

*Doping Control*

*Costumes.*

*General duties and powers of referees*

## **Judicial Laws**

*The Referee and Jury of Appeal.*

*Protests and Appeals.*

*Complaints – their definitions and submission.*

*Suspensions.*

## **FINA Technical Rules**

*Officials*

*Disqualification of competitors*

*Team races.*

*Minimum ages*

*Starting and false starts*

*Duties and responsibilities common to all officials.*

*The race; including fouling.*

*An understanding of Disability Swimming Technical Rules as they affect a referee*

## **FINA Open Water Technical Rules**



## **FINA RULES**

The rules governing swimming competitions are set by the Federation Internationale De Natation (FINA) and are available on [www.fina.org/rules](http://www.fina.org/rules) The rules relevant to Open Water referees are:

### **GR GENERAL RULES**

#### **GR 1 ELIGIBILITY**

GR 1.1 All competitors shall be registered with their National Federation to be eligible to compete.

#### **GR 5 SWIMWEAR**

**GR 5.1** The swimwear (swimsuit, cap and goggles) of all competitors shall be in good moral taste and suitable for the individual sports disciplines and not to carry any symbol which may be considered offensive.

**GR 5.2** All swimsuits shall be non transparent.

**GR 5.3** The referee of a competition has the authority to exclude any competitor whose swimsuit or body symbols do not comply with this Rule.

**GR 5.4** Before any swimwear of new design, construction or material is used in competition, the manufacturer of such swimwear must submit the swimwear to FINA and obtain approval of FINA.

#### **GR 6 ADVERTISING**

GR 6.1 Identification in the form of logos on swimwear, i.e. swimsuit, cap and goggles, and equipment, i.e. track suits, official's uniforms, footwear, towels and bags, is permitted in accordance with regulations established in the By-Laws (BL 7). A two-piece swimsuit shall, in relation to advertising, be regarded as one. The name and the flag of the country of the competitor or the country code shall not be regarded as advertisements.

GR 6.2 Body advertisement is not allowed in any way whatsoever.

GR 6.3 Advertising for tobacco or alcohol is not allowed.

#### **GR 7 SUBSTITUTION, DISQUALIFICATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

**GR 7.1** Any entered competitor may be substituted by another entered competitor at the Team Leaders Meeting. It is mandatory for one representative of each Federation to take part in the Team Leaders Meeting. Failing to do so will result in a fine of 100 Swiss Francs.

**GR 7.5** If an error by an official follows a fault by a competitor, the fault by the competitor may be expunged.

#### **GR 8 SMOKING BAN**

At all international competitions, no smoking shall be permitted in any area designated for competitors, either prior to or during competitions.

#### ***Guidance***

*Referees should consult Promoter's Conditions to ensure they are aware of and comply with any conditions relating to substitution, disqualification and withdrawal relating to the meet in which they are officiating.*

#### **GR 9.2 PROTESTS**

##### **GR 9.2 Protests**

### **GR 9.2.1** Protests are possible

- (a) if the rules and regulations for the conduct of the competition are not observed;
- (b) if other conditions endanger the competitions and/or competitors; or
- (c) against decisions of the referee; however, no protest shall be allowed against decisions of fact.

### **GR 9.2.2** Protest must be submitted

- (a) to the referee;
- (b) in writing on FINA Forms;
- (c) by the responsible team leader;
- (d) together with a deposit of 100 Swiss Francs or its equivalent; and
- (e) within 30 minutes following the conclusion of the respective event or match.

If conditions causing a potential protest are noted prior to the event a protest must be lodged before the signal to start is given.

**GR 9.2.3** All protests shall be considered by the referee. If he rejects the protest, he must state the reasons for his decision. The team leader may appeal the rejection to the Jury of Appeal whose decision shall be final. In Olympic Games and World Championships the Commission in each discipline shall consider the protest and give recommendations to the Jury of Appeal.

**GR 9.2.4** If the protest is rejected, the deposit will be forfeited to the management body of the competition. If the protest is upheld, the deposit will be returned.

### **Guidance**

*A protest is an allegation that the rules or the promoter's conditions governing a competition have not been complied with or have been misinterpreted*

*For example:*

- *swimmer is competing out of age*
- *the correct officials are not present*
- *competition starting times are not being adhered to*
- *a swimmer is ineligible to represent a club*
- *interpretation / application of the rules*

### **GR 9.3 Jury of Appeal**

**GR 9.3.1** For Olympic Games and World Championships, the Jury of Appeal shall be composed of the Bureau Members and Honorary Members present with the President or in his absence a Vice President, as Chairman. For all other FINA competitions, the Jury of Appeal shall be the FINA delegate together with any Bureau Members or members of the appropriate Technical Committee present, with the delegate as chairman. Each member shall have one vote, except as provided hereunder, and in case of equality of voting, the Chairman has a casting vote.

**GR 9.3.2** A jury member is allowed to speak, but not to vote, on a case in which the interest of his own Federation is involved. A jury member having acted as an official is not allowed to vote on a case if there is a protest against his decision or on his interpretation of a Rule. In case of urgency, the jury may vote on a matter even if it has not been possible to call all the members. The decision of the jury is final.

### **GR 9.4 Management Committee**

**GR 9.4.1** The actual management of all Olympic Games and World Championship contests shall be under the control of FINA.



**GR 9.4.2** For the Olympic Games and the World Championships the FINA Bureau shall be the Management Committee. Management Committees for FINA World Swimming Championships (25m), FINA World Open Water Swimming Championships, FINA World Masters Championships, FINA World Junior Championships in Swimming, Diving, Water Polo and Synchronised Swimming and any other FINA Championship or competition shall be appointed by the FINA Executive.

**GR 9.4.3** The Management Committee shall have the power, if they think it advisable, to add one representative of the country holding the Olympic Games or World Championships.

**GR 9.4.4** The Management Committee shall be responsible for the entire management of the competition, including the arrangement of the programme of events and the appointment of officials.

**GR 9.4.5** Should any member of the Management Committee be absent from the Olympic Games or World Championships, the remaining members shall have the power to appoint substitutes, if necessary. Twelve members shall constitute a quorum.

**GR 9.4.6** When the Management Committee is acting as Jury of Appeal, Rule GR 9.3 shall apply.

## **GR 9.5 Commissions**

**GR 9.5.1** For each discipline in the Olympic Games and World Championships a commission shall be appointed consisting of the respective Technical Delegate (Bureau Liaison) and Chairman and Honorary Secretary of each respective Technical Committee.

**GR 9.5.2** Subject to the supervision of the FINA Bureau, the Commissions shall be responsible for:

- a) the conduct of the competition in the respective discipline.
- b) the control of all technical equipment and installations prior to and during the event
- c) making rosters for officials
- d) investigating cases of protest as preparation for the Jury of Appeal.

### **Guidance**

*The FINA rules governing jury of appeal, management committee and commission are given for completeness and understanding of the procedures. At all events there should be an equivalent of a management committee and a commission who will organise and run the event and at national events there will be a jury of appeal.*

## **BL BY LAWS**

### **BL 6 TECHNICAL OFFICIALS (updated 16 Feb 2010)**

The maximum age of Technical Officials (Judges, Starters and Referees) when officiating at FINA Championships or FINA Competitions, except Masters and Water Polo, shall be sixty five (65) years during the year of competition. For Water Polo, the age limit shall be fifty five (55) years during the year of competition. Technical Officials on the FINA Lists of International Referees, Starters or Judges above that age shall be entitled to officiate until the end of their appointment.

### **BL 7 ADVERTISING AT FINA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AND FINA COMPETITIONS**

**PREAMBLE:** Identification in FINA Rule GR 6.1 means the normal display of the name, designation, trademark, logo or any other distinctive sign of the manufacturer of the item or of any other advertiser permitted in accordance with this rule.

#### **BL 7.1 Advertising**

Advertising identification appearing on swimwear, pool deck equipment and official's uniforms at FINA Championships and Competitions, with exception for FINA World Masters Championships, is permitted as follows:

### BL 7.1.1 Swimsuits:

- One (1) manufacturer's logo of a maximum size of 20 square centimetres when worn. Where one-piece body suits are used, two (2) logos of the manufacturer shall be permitted, one above the waist and one below the waist of a maximum size of 20 square centimetres each when worn. These two (2) logos of the manufacturer shall not be placed immediately adjacent to each other. Where two-piece body suits are used, the two (2) logos of the manufacturer shall be placed on one part each.
- One (1) flag and one (1) country name or code of a maximum of 20 square centimetres when worn.
- One (1) sponsor's logo of a maximum of 20 square centimetres when worn.

### BL 7.1.2 Caps:

- One (1) manufacturer's logo of a maximum of 20 square centimetres on the front
- One (1) FINA Partner's logo of the size decided by FINA from case to case. The side on which the Partner's logo shall be printed will be advised by FINA.
- One (1) flag and/or country name (code) of the size of 32 square centimetres. The side on which the flag and country name (code) shall be printed will be advised by FINA.
- Athlete's name of the size of 20 square centimetres. The athlete's name shall be printed on the same side as the flag and country name (code).



### BL 7.1.3 Goggles:

- Two (2) manufacturer logos of maximum 6 square centimetres are allowed on goggles but only on the spectacle frame or band.

## BL 8 SWIMWEAR

Last updated 17 Jun 2010

**BL 8.1** All FINA approved swimwear to be used at the Olympic Games and FINA World Championships must be approved by FINA at least twelve (12) months prior to the start of the respective competition. In addition, it must be available for all competitors by 1st January of the year of the Olympic Games or FINA World Championships.

**BL 8.2** In swimming competitions the competitor must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. No additional items, like arm bands or leg bands shall be regarded as parts of a swimsuit.

**BL 8.3** Pool swimming. From January 1, 2010 swimwear for men shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee, and for women, shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor shall extend below knee. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials.

[- FINA Requirements for swimwear approval \(from 01.01.2010\)](#)

[- Approval form](#)

**BL 8.4** From June 1, 2010 Open Water swimwear for both men and women shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor shall extend below the ankle. All Open Water swimsuits shall comply with the FINA Criteria for Materials and Approval Procedures.

**BL 8.5** From January 15, 2010 in Masters Pool Swimming competitions the rules BL 8.1, BL 8.2 and BL 8.3 apply. From June 1, 2010 the rule BL 8.4 applies also for the Masters Open Water competitions.

It is clarified that swimsuits which fulfill the shape requirement set forth in BL 8.3, respectively BL 8.4 (for Open Water Swimming) can be accepted even if they do not bear a valid FINA approval label provided they effectively and evidently fulfil the material requirements set forth in the current FINA Requirements for Swimwear Approval. This is the case for swimsuits made of traditional permeable textile (i.e. open mesh material) material (such as cotton, Nylon, Lycra and the like) with no application of surface treatment closing the open mesh structure. In case of doubt in this respect and when notably such doubt concerns a swimsuit used at the occasion of a World record, an actual check of the swimsuit can be required from the competitor or Certifying Official and the swimsuit is to be forwarded to the FINA Office for submission to an actual control of all or parts of the requirements.

### **BL 9.3 Rules for Open Water World Championships and Olympic Games**

#### **BL 9.3.7 Open Water Swimming**

**BL 9.3.7.1** For the Olympic Games, the World Championships and the World Junior Championships each member may enter a maximum of two (2) males and two (2) females per individual event. For team events in the World Championships and the World Junior Championships, the member can enter only one (1) team per event.

#### **BL 9.3.7.2 Numbering of swimmers**

The numbering of athletes is to appear on the arms, upper backs and hands of competitors. On the arms the numbers shall be arranged vertically. On the upper backs and hands the numbering is horizontally. The numbering of the arms and backs is made with an ink template: 100 mm high x 60 mm wide. The numbering of the hands of competitors is allowed by marking pens. For athletes with darker skin and full body swim suits a white marker pen will be required.

#### **BL 9.3.7.3 World championships**

For Olympic Games the start shall be from a fixed platform.

##### **BL 9.3.7.3.1 Identification**

In events of 10 km and under it is mandatory for the head or cap to display on each side the "national-three letter code" and may display the swimmer's national flag. The country code shall be a minimum of 0.04m in height.

##### **BL 9.3.7.3.2 Events**

5 km Team Event as Time Trial

- A team shall consist of three (3) swimmers, either one (1) man and two (2) women or two (2) men and one (1) woman.
- Every team shall start with all swimmers together sixty (60) seconds after the preceding team.
- The allocation of starting positions shall be taken from automatic random draw. The ranking shall be decided by the individual time achieved by the third swimmer of the team. Only one team per NF is allowed.

#### **BL 9.3.7.4 World Junior Championships**

##### **BL 9.3.7.4.1 Age Groups as at 31st December of the year of the competition**

- 14-15 years Boys and Girls
- 16-18 years Boys and Girls

#### **BL 9.3.7.4.2 Individual Events**

- 14-15 years 5 km Boys and Girls
- 16-18 years 7.5 km Boys and Girls

#### **BL 9.3.7.4.3 Team Events**

- A team comprises of three (3) swimmers (either two (2) boys and one (1) girl or two (2) girls and one (1) boy)
- Two age categories:  
14-15 years  
16-18 years
- Distance of the team event: 3 km for both categories
- For the team event, swimmers from the 14-15 age group category (maximum two (2) swimmers) can swim in the 16-18 age group category according to the team distribution for boys / girls and the rule of one (1) team per Federation age group.

#### **BL 9.3.7.4.4 Entries**

- Two (2) athletes per Federation per Event in the individual events
- One (1) team per Federation per age group in the Team Event

#### **BL 9.3.7.5 Olympic Games**

**BL 9.3.7.5.1** Only events in 10 km will be held for both Men and Women.

#### **BL 9.3.7.5.2 The Start**

For Olympic Games the start shall be from a fixed platform.

#### **BL 9.3.7.5.3 Qualification for London 2012 Olympic Games**

##### **1. FINA World Championships 2011 Shanghai (CHN)**

The first ten (10) finalists from the 10 km event – men and women – will qualify. 20 Marathon Swimmers (10 Men & 10 Women)

##### **2. FINA Olympic Marathon Swim Qualifier 2012**

Only NF/NOC not having qualified swimmers through point 1 above may elect to send two (2) athletes per event. Each NF/NOC will qualify only one (1) athlete per event. 18 Marathon Swimmers (9 Men & 9 Women)

#### Continental Representation

The first eligible finisher in the 10 km event – Men and Women – from each of five (5) Continents will qualify. 10 Marathon Swimmers (5 Men & 5 Women)

In the event that a NF/NOC has previously qualified one (1) or two (2) swimmers, the selection process will move to the next eligible finisher in the FINA Olympic Marathon Swim Qualifier event to ensure that each of these competitions yields a competitor.

#### Host Nation

One (1) male and one (1) female marathon swimmer from the host nation if not previously qualified, will qualify. 2 Marathon Swimmers (1 Man & 1 Woman)

If the host nation qualifies two (2) athletes through the Point 1 above or one (1) athlete through the Points above, than this slot will be added to Point 2 and allow it to yield an additional 10th qualification.

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## **British Swimming Judicial regulations**

A protest may be made by a competitor or their representative. A protest may be made orally to the referee and must be confirmed in writing within 30 minutes following the posting of that event's results, unless the reason for the protest is known before the event, in which case the protest must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable before the event. If a protest is made prior to the appointment of the referee then the protest should be made to the promoter who shall refer the protest to a referee when appointed.

A protest may not be made against any decision of a referee or any other official regarding placing, fouling or any other fact of a competition. A referee's interpretation of the rules or promoter's conditions must be accepted at the time but may be the subject of a protest

An appeal may be made against the decision of the referee on a protest, to a jury of appeal.

Every decision regarding protests must be confirmed in writing

The recorders and announcer need to be kept informed of the status of any protest by the referee.

### **Appointment of a Jury of Appeal**

The promoter shall appoint the jury of appeal. The responsibility for dealing with protests remains with the referee but the referee's decision on a protest made to him may be appealed directly to the jury of appeal.

A jury of appeal should be appointed for all meets. They should be available immediately but shall not undertake any administrative or officiating duties during the competition.

### **How is a protest made?**

If the reason for the protest is known before the meet then it must be made to the referee as soon as reasonably practicable beforehand. It may mean that the protest is sent to the promoter before the meet.

The promoter has no power to deal with a protest. It can only be dealt with by the referee. This may mean the promoter has to appoint the referee before the date of the meet and pass on the protest to him. The promoter should provide the referee with a copy of the competition conditions before the meet.

Where more than one referee has been appointed for a competition comprising swimming races, one of them shall be appointed and empowered, from the date upon which entries to that competition close, as the referee. The referee shall receive all protests of a general nature (e.g. a protest which covers more than one specific event). However if a protest relates to a specific event then the referee responsible for that event must be responsible for the protest.

If the protest arises whilst the competition is taking place then it must be made to the referee within thirty minutes of the incident which gives rise to it occurring.

A protest can be made by a competitor (or someone on his behalf) a club, or an official taking part in the competition. In other words virtually anybody can make a protest.

### **Guidance**

*How should a protest be dealt with?*

*The procedure for the handling of a protest should include the following objectives and principles:*

- *try to resolve the matter, as soon as possible, to the satisfaction of all parties. Emotions are often running high and it may not be possible to resolve the protest surrounded by swimmers, coaches, parents and officials (who all have their own understanding of the rules / opinion on the incident);*
- *if there is more than one referee then one of the other referees can keep the competition moving;*
- *find a quiet area and listen to the individual making the protest quietly and carefully making a written note of all the salient facts;*
- *decide whether a protest is, in fact, being made and if so, whether it can be accepted;*
- *involve all the other parties who are the subject of the protest. Listen to their point of view, issues and concerns. If any of the parties concerned are under eighteen then the referee must involve the parent, guardian or suitable club official. Do not interview a minor alone;*

- *try and get all the parties together in a calm and constructive atmosphere and try to reach agreement. Do not rush the matter, let all concerned have their say and try and resolve grievances;*
- *at the end of the discussion the referee must reach and record a clear and positive decision based on the facts submitted, swimming rules and the promoter's conditions;*
- *the information recorded should include, the original protest, the reason for it, names of all the parties involved and witnesses, a brief summary of the evidence and the decision with reasons;*
- *no firm guidelines about types of decisions can be given as every case is different. The jury/referee has to make every effort to reach a fair and just result based on facts;*
- *exceptionally sufficient information may not be available to resolve the protest immediately (e.g. such as the eligibility of a swimmer to take part in a competition when the registration documentation may not be available). The referee will delay his decision until all relevant information is obtained and considered. A timescale should be put on receipt of the information. In such cases it is the responsibility of the referee to keep all the parties concerned informed of progress. It is recommended that if the matter cannot be resolved within the agreed timescale the referee informs all the parties accordingly;*
- *it should be noted that the promoter no longer has any function in the process other than to receive a protest made prior to the event and to collect and store the protest paperwork for a year after the event. Should the referee be unable to resolve the protest the only means by which any party can pursue the issue is by way of an appeal. It is advisable for the referee to inform the promoter that an unresolved protest exists;*
- *communication with all concerned, is very important and the referee must decide when and what to communicate. It is essential to keep the rumour machine under control. If the announcer is asked to explain what is happening then give him a written note rather than have the announcer produce an interpretation;*
- *if the protest cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned then they must be informed of their right of appeal to the jury of appeal;*

*Pitfalls to watch for when handling a protest include but are not limited to:*

- *not made in the correct timescales;*
- *insufficient facts collected;*
- *all parties not given the opportunity to have a hearing;*
- *failure to make a full record of the issue;*
- *promoter takes over.*

*Be seen to be easily available, a good listener, fair, positive, decisive, thorough and just.*

# Open Water Rules

All World Championships, World Cups, and FINA competitions shall be governed by the rules of FINA with the following exceptions and additions.

## **OWS 1 DEFINITIONS**

OWS 1.1 OPEN WATER SWIMMING shall be defined as any competition that takes place in rivers, lakes, oceans or water channels except for 10km events;

OWS 1.1.1 MARATHON SWIMMING shall be defined as any 10km event in open water competitions;

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

OWS 1.2 the age limit for all FINA Open Water swimming events should be at least 14 years of age.

### **Guidance**

*The minimum age for ASA events is 11 years but there are restrictions on the temperature of the water and the distance to be swum.*

## **OWS 2 OFFICIALS**

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

- a chief referee (one per race)
- referees
- chief judge
- 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 of 10 km or less
- turn judges (one per alteration of course)
- starter
- announcer
- recorder

### **Guidance**

*It should be noted that the officials listed in OWS 2 are the minimum number of officials to be appointed to fulfil the various roles. Where possible it is desirable to appoint additional officials.*

## **OWS 3 DUTIES OF OFFICIALS**

The **chief referee** shall:

OWS 3.1 have full control and authority over all officials and shall approve their assignments and instruct them regarding all special features or regulations related to the competition. The referee shall enforce all the rules and decisions of FINA and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the competition, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by these rules.

OWS 3.2 have authority to intervene in the competition at any stage to ensure that FINA rules are observed.



OWS 3.2.1 in case of hazardous conditions that jeopardize the safety of the swimmers and the officials; in conjunction with the safety officer he can stop the race.

OWS 3.3 adjudicate on all protests related to the competition in progress.

OWS 3.4 give a decision in cases where the judges' decision and times recorded do not agree.

OWS 3.5 signal to swimmers, by raised flag and short blasts on a whistle, that the start is imminent and when satisfied indicate by pointing the flag at the starter that the competition may commence.

OWS 3.6 disqualify any swimmer for any violation of the rules that he personally observes or which is reported to him by other authorised officials.

OWS 3.7 ensure that all necessary officials for the conduct of the competition are at their respective posts. He may appoint substitutes for any who are absent, incapable of acting or found to be inefficient. He may appoint additional officials if considered necessary.

OWS 3.8 receive all reports prior to the start of the race from the clerk of the course, course officer and safety officer.

#### **Guidance**

- *Responsibility for the safe conduct of all activities in all parts of the venue remains with the referee.*
- *More than any other technical official the referee needs to be alert and concentrating at all times. It is also important that the referee is seen to be fully in control and be prepared to be conciliatory rather than aggressive.*

The **referees** shall:

OWS 3.9 have authority to intervene in competition at any stage to ensure that FINA rules are observed.

OWS 3.10 disqualify any swimmer for any violation of the rules that he personally observes.

#### **Guidance**

*The referees (old name assistant referees), no longer has to conduct a draw for officials in escort safety boats, and receive reports from other officials. But importantly now they can disqualify.*

*The following roles upare included in the level 1 and level 2 workbooks but are included here for completeness and because of the recent rule changes.*

The **starter** shall:

OWS 3.11 start the race in accordance to OWS 4 following the signal by the chief referee.

The **chief timekeeper** shall:

OWS 3.12 assign at least three timekeepers to their positions for the start and finish.

OWS 3.13 ensure that a time check is made to allow all persons to synchronise their watches with the official running clocks 15 minutes before start time.

OWS 3.14 collect from each timekeeper a card showing the time recorded for each swimmer, and, if necessary, inspect their watches.

OWS 3.15 record or examine the official time on the card for each swimmer.

#### **Guidance**

*The chief timekeeper is told to appoint three timekeepers, however the new rule only asks for two. Assume that there will only be a chief timekeeper plus two timekeepers required.*

**Timekeepers** shall:

OWS 3.16 take the time of each swimmer assigned. The watches must have memory and print out capability and shall be certified correct to the satisfaction of the Management Committee.

OWS 3.17 start their watches at the starting signal, and only stop their watches when instructed by the chief timekeeper.

OWS 3.18 promptly after each finish record the time and swimmers' number on the timecard and turn it over to the chief timekeeper.

Note: When automatic officiating equipment is used, the same complement of hand timers is to be used.

The **chief judge** shall:

OWS 3.19 assign each judge to a position.

OWS 3.20 record and communicate any decision received from the referees during the competition

OWS 3.21 collect after the race, signed results sheets from each judge and establish the result and placing which shall be sent directly to the chief referee.

**Finish judges** (three) shall:

OWS 3.22 be positioned in line with the finish where they shall have at all times a clear view of the finish.

OWS 3.23 record after each finish the placing of the swimmers according to the assignment given.

Note: Finish judges shall not act as timekeepers in the same event.

### **Guidance**

*FINA rules state there should be a chief finish judge and two finish judges. There are no specific roles identified for the new role of chief finish judge, so assume that the three mentioned here are the Chief plus two.*

Each **race judge** shall:

OWS 3.24 be positioned in an escort safety craft (where applicable), assigned by random draw prior to the start, so as to be able to observe, at all times, his appointed swimmer.

OWS 3.25 ensure at all times that the rules of competition are complied with, violations being recorded in writing and reported to a referee at the earliest opportunity.

OWS 3.26 have the power to order a swimmer from the water upon expiry of any time limit so ordered by the referee.

OWS 3.27 ensure that his appointed swimmer does not take unfair advantage or commit unsporting impediment on another swimmer and if the situation requires instruct a swimmer to maintain clearance from any other swimmer.

**Turn judges** shall:

OWS 3.28 be positioned so as to ensure all swimmers execute the alterations in course as indicated in the competition information documents and as given at the pre-race briefing.

OWS 3.29 record any infringement of the turn procedures on the record sheets provided and indicate the infringement to the race judge at the time of infringement by blasts on a whistle.

OWS 3.30 promptly upon completion of the event deliver the signed record sheet to the chief judge.

The **safety officer** shall:

OWS 3.31 be responsible to the referee for all aspects of safety related to the conduct of the competition.

OWS 3.32 check that the entire course, with special regard to the start and finish areas, is safe, suitable, and free of any obstruction.

OWS 3.33 be responsible for ensuring that sufficient powered safety craft are available during the competition so as to provide full safety backup to the escort safety craft.

OWS 3.34 provide prior to the competitions to all swimmers a tide/current chart clearly indicating the time of tide changes on the course and showing the effect of tides or current on a swimmer's progress along the course.

OWS 3.35 in conjunction with the medical officer advise the referee if, in their opinion, conditions are unsuitable for staging the competition and make recommendations for the modification of the course or the manner in which the competition is conducted.

The **medical officer** shall:

OWS 3.36 be responsible to the referee for all medical aspects related to the competition and competitors.

OWS 3.37 inform the local medical facilities of the nature of the competition and ensure that any casualties can be evacuated to medical facilities at the earliest opportunity.

OWS 3.38 in conjunction with the safety officer, advise the referee if, in their opinion, conditions are unsuitable for staging the competition and make recommendations for the modification of the course or the manner in which the competition is conducted.

The **course officer** shall:

OWS 3.39 be responsible to the Management Committee for the correct survey of the course.

OWS 3.40 ensure the start and finish areas are correctly marked and all equipment has been correctly installed and, where applicable, is in working order.

OWS 3.41 ensure all course alteration points are correctly marked, and manned prior to the commencement of the competition.

OWS 3.42 with the referee and safety officer inspect the course and markings prior to the commencement of competition.

OWS 3.43 ensure that turn judges are in position prior to the start of the competition and report this to the referees.

The **clerk of the course** shall:

OWS 3.44 assemble and prepare competitors prior to each event and ensure proper reception facilities at the finish are available for all competitors.

OWS 3.45 ensure each competitor is identified correctly with their race number and that all swimmers have trimmed fingernails and toenails and are not wearing any jewellery, including watches

OWS 3.46 be certain all swimmers are present, in the assembly area, at the required time prior to the start.

OWS 3.47 keep swimmers and officials informed of the time remaining before the start at suitable intervals until the last five minutes, during which one-minute warnings shall be given.

OWS 3.48 be responsible for ensuring that all clothing and equipment left in the start area is transported to the finish area and kept in safekeeping.

OWS 3.49 ensure that all competitors leaving the water at the finish have the basic equipment required for their well being should their own attendants not be present at that time.

### **Guidance**

*Guidance: The clerk of the course is a very important part of the safety management of a race; he is responsible for the safety of the swimmers and thus his role in ensuring the swimmers are correctly identified with their race numbers clearly visible is vital. The rule regarding trimmed fingernails and toenails are designed to minimise the chance of other competitors getting scratched, either accidentally or deliberately, if nails need cutting tell the swimmer to get them cut before they can enter the water. Do not attempt to cut them yourself.*

*The rule regarding jewellery should always be strictly enforced, particularly with body piercing jewellery. Watches should never be worn.*

The **recorder** shall:

OWS 3.50 record withdrawals from the competition, enter results on official forms, and maintain record for team awards as appropriate.

OWS 3.51 report any violation to the chief referee on a signed card detailing the event, and the rule infringement.

THE RECORDER shall:

OWS 3.50 record withdrawals from the competition, enter results on official forms, and maintain record for team awards as appropriate.

*Guidance: This rule makes the role seem simple, however this is another vital role. The recorder should be at the point where the swimmers register. The list of registered swimmers should be given to the referee before he does the swimmers' briefing. The referee can then carry out a roll call against this updated list to ensure that all swimmers are attending the briefing. The clerk of the course will then use this list to check the swimmers as they are mustered at the start and are counted into the water. Finally the number of swimmers who actually start should be communicated by the referee to all officials. Any withdrawals at any point will be noted by the recorder, including those who retire during the race. If radios are used to control the race the recorder should be given one.*

### **Announcer**

The Announcer shall:

- Make announcements as determined by the referee in relation to events, start lists, presentation of swimmers, withdrawals and disqualifications.
- Make such announcements as are necessary in relation to all aspects of safety relating to the competition and venue.
- Make other announcements only as directed by the Promoter, referee or other authorised person.

*Guidance: At some events a commentator will be appointed to work from a boat. He is not a technical official and should obey the instructions of the race referee. He will be given a radio to broadcast his commentary, but this must not be on the same band as the radios used to control the safety of the event.*

# The Event

## **OWS 4 THE START**

OWS 4.1 all Open Water competitions shall start with all competitors standing on a fixed platform or in water depth sufficient for them to commence swimming on the start signal.

OWS 4.1.1 when starting from a fixed platform competitors shall be assigned a position on the platform, as determined by random draw

OWS 4.2 the clerk of the course shall keep competitors and officials informed of the time before start at suitable intervals and at one-minute intervals for the last five minutes.

OWS 4.3 when the number of entries dictate the start shall be segregated in the men's and women's competitions. The men's events shall always start before the women's events.

OWS 4.4 the start line shall be clearly defined by either overhead apparatus or by removable equipment at water level.

OWS 4.5 the referee shall indicate by a flag held upright and short blasts on a whistle when the start is imminent and indicate that the competition is under starter's orders by pointing the flag at the starter.

OWS 4.6 the starter shall be positioned so as to be clearly visible to all competitors.

OWS 4.6.1 on the starter command "take your marks" they shall take up a starting position with at least one foot at the front of the platform.

OWS 4.6.2 the starter will give the starting signal when he considers all swimmers are ready.

OWS 4.7 the start signal shall be both audible and visual.

OWS 4.8 if in the opinion of the referee an unfair advantage has been gained at the start the offending competitor will be given a yellow or red flag in accordance with OWS 6.3.

OWS 4.9 all escort safety craft shall be stationed prior to the start so as not to interfere with any competitor, and if picking up their swimmer from behind shall navigate in such a way as not to manoeuvre through the field of swimmers.

OWS 4.10 although they may start together, in all other respects the men's and women's competitions shall be treated as separate events.

### **Guidance**

*When a starting platform is provided swimmers may opt to start in the water, those swimmers shall enter the water on the referee's long whistle. On the command 'take your marks' they shall immediately take up the starting position at their allocated starting position on the platform with at least one hand in contact with the platform. Hand contact must be maintained with the starting place until the start signal has been given*

*Referees should bring their own personality to the role. However, there are some points worth considering that would result in a consistent approach to two particular activities:*

- a) at the start of a race the signal to the swimmers should be "three only" short whistles.*
- a) the referee should stand in a position to gain the best view when observing the start and able to spot any movement in advance of the starting signal. The starter should also be in the view of the swimmers when they are looking at the referee. The swimmers should be able to see both the referee and the starter without having to move their heads. Thus it is best for the starter to be placed close to the referee, not at the opposite end of the starting line*
- b) The visual start signal will be a flag. This is moved down simultaneously with the audible signal. The dropping of the flag should be made in such a way that the swimmers can clearly see the downward movement of the arm and the flag.*

## **OWS 5 THE VENUE**

OWS 5.1 World Championships and FINA competitions shall be for open water distances, 25 kilometres, 10 kilometres and 5 kilometres, conducted at a venue and course approved by FINA.

OWS 5.2 the course shall be in water that is subject to only minor currents or tide and may be salt or fresh water.

OWS 5.3 a certificate of suitability for use of the venue shall be issued by the appropriate local health and safety authorities. In general terms the certification must relate to water purity and to physical safety from other considerations.

OWS 5.4 the minimum depth of water at any point on the course shall be 1.40 meter.

OWS 5.5 the water temperature should be a minimum of 16°C. It should be checked the day of the race, 2 hours before the start, in the middle of the course at a depth of 40 cm. This control should be done in the presence of a commission made up of the following persons present: a referee, a member of the organising committee and one coach from the teams present designated during the technical meeting

OWS 5.6 all turns/alterations of course shall be clearly indicated.

OWS 5.7 a clearly marked craft or platform, containing a turn judge, shall be positioned at all alterations of course in such a manner as not to obstruct a swimmer's visibility of the turn.

OWS 5.8 all feeding platforms, turning apparatus and turn judges craft/platforms shall be securely fixed in position and not be subject to tidal, wind or other movements.

OWS 5.9 the final approach to the finish shall be clearly defined with markers of a distinctive colour.

OWS 5.10 the finish shall be clearly defined and marked by a vertical face.

*Guidance: The venue is the promoters responsibility. The safety officer, course officer and referee should be included in the management committee when planning the venue and should reassure themselves on the day that the venue, course and facilities meet all their requirements.*

*The course distance can be any length, not just the 5, 10 and 25 km distances. However where possible a race over one of these distances should be offered so that swimmers become used to swimming the international standard distances/*

*The temperature can change in tidal waters and early in the day, so the important measurement should be made within 30 minutes of the start. It is also advisable to check the temperature during the events.*

*Where possible the finish be "swim through" see also OWS 7.2.*

## **OWS 6 THE RACE**

OWS 6.1 all Open Water competitions shall be freestyle events.

OWS 6.2 race judges shall instruct any swimmer who is, in their opinion, taking unfair advantage by pacing or slip streaming with the escort craft to move clear

OWS 6.3 disqualification procedure

OWS 6.3.1 If in the opinion of the chief referee or referees, any swimmer, or swimmer's approved representative, or escort safety craft, takes advantage by committing any violation of the rules or by making intentional contact with any swimmer, the following proceeding shall apply:

1st infringement:

A yellow flag and a card bearing the swimmer's number shall be raised to indicate and to inform the swimmer that he is in violation of the rules.

2nd infringement:

A red flag and a card bearing the swimmer's number shall be raised by the referee (OWS 3.6) to indicate and to inform the swimmer that he is for the second time in violation of the rules. The swimmer shall be disqualified. He must leave the water immediately and be placed in an escort craft, and take no further part in the race.

OWS 6.3.2 if in the opinion of a referee, an action of a swimmer or an escort safety craft, or a swimmer's approved representative is deemed to be 'unsporting' the referee shall disqualify the swimmer concerned immediately.

OWS 6.4 escort safety craft shall manoeuvre so as not to obstruct or place themselves directly ahead of any swimmer and not take unfair advantage by pacing or slip streaming.

OWS 6.5 escort safety craft shall attempt to maintain a constant position so as to station the swimmer at, or forward of, the mid point of the escort safety craft.

OWS 6.6 standing on the bottom during a race shall not disqualify a swimmer but they may not walk or jump.

OWS 6.7 with the exception of 6.6 above swimmers shall not receive support from any fixed or floating object and shall not intentionally touch or be touched by their escort safety craft or crew therein.

OWS 6.7.1 rendering assistance by an official medical officer to a swimmer in apparent distress should always supersede official rules of disqualification through "intentional contact" with a swimmer (OWS3.1)

OWS 6.8 each escort safety craft shall contain: a race judge, a person of the swimmer's choice, and the minimum crew required to operate the escort safety craft.

OWS 6.9 no swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device which may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy. Goggles, a maximum of two (2) caps, nose clip and earplugs may be used.

OWS 6.10 swimmers shall be allowed to use grease or other such substances providing these are not, in the opinion of the referee, excessive.

OWS 6.11 the pacing of a swimmer by another person entering the water is not permitted.

OWS 6.12 coaching and the giving of instructions by the approved swimmer's representative on the feeding platform or in the escort safety craft is permitted. No whistle shall be allowed. Feeding poles are not to exceed 5m in length when extended. No objects, rope or wire may hang off the end of feeding poles except national flags. National flags are allowed to be attached to the feeding pole but may not exceed the size of 30cm x 20 cm.

OWS 6.13 when taking sustenance swimmers may use rule OWS 6.6 provided rule OWS 6.7 is not infringed.

OWS 6.14 all swimmers shall have their competition number clearly displayed in waterproof ink on their upper back, arms and hands.

OWS 6.15 each escort safety craft shall display the swimmer's competition number so as to be easily seen from either side of the escort safety craft, and the national flag of the swimmer's federation.

OWS 6.16 time limits

OWS 6.16.1 in all events, time limits shall apply as follows from the finish time of the first swimmers:

- events under 25 km 30 minutes
- events of 25 km 60 minutes
- events over 25 km 120 minutes

OWS 6.16.2 competitors who do not finish the course within the time limits shall be removed from the water except that the referee may allow a competitor outside the time limit to complete the course but not participate in any points or prizes awarded.

#### OWS 6.17 emergency abandonment

OWS 6.17.1 in cases of emergency abandonment of races of 10 km or less, the race will be restarted from the beginning at the earliest possible moment.

OWS 6.17.2 in cases of emergency abandonment for any race of longer than 10km, where the lead swimmer has accomplished at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the race, the final ranking will be as reported by the chief referee. If the lead swimmer has not completed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the race, it will be restarted from the beginning at the earliest moment possible.

#### **Guidance**

*OWS 6.2 Slipstreaming or pacing is not allowed by using an escort craft. Note there is now nothing in the rules regarding slipstreaming from another competitor.*

*OWS 6.3 The referee does not have to give a yellow card before issuing a disqualification, if a an action is obviously in contravention of the rules the disqualification can be made immediately( OWS 6.3.2).*

*When issuing a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> infringement the referee should have a suitable white card (laminated if possible) on which to write the offending swimmer's number. It is suggested that a non-permanent marker pen be used so that the card can be re-used several times A note should be made of the swimmer's number, the infringement and the time. If possible appoint a referee's assistant to record incidents. This is a very good training role for referee candidates.*

*OWS 6.12 Interpret this rule to say no whistle shall be carried by the swimmer's coach. The appointed official will need a whistle for use to attract the attention of swimmers and other officials in emergencies.*

*OWS 6.17 All officials on the water should make an attempt to maintain a "race order" at all times so that in the event of abandonment the positions can be established at the time of abandonment.*

*OWS 6.17.1 It should be noted that is will not always be to possible re-start an abandoned swim. In this case the referee should establish a race order at the time of abandonment (see note above) and present his intentions to the promoter for establishing a result.*



## **OWS 7 THE FINISH OF THE RACE**

OWS 7.1 the area leading to the finish apparatus should be clearly marked by rows of buoys which narrow as they get closer to the finish wall. Escort safety craft should be stationed at the approach to and entrance of the finish lane to ensure that only the escort safety craft authorized to do so enter or cross this entrance.

OWS 7.2 the finish apparatus should, where possible, be a vertical wall at least 5 metres wide fixed if necessary to floatation devices, securely fastened in place so as not to be moved by wind, tide or the force of a swimmer striking the wall. The finish should be filmed and recorded by video system with slow motion and recall facilities including timing equipment.

OWS 7.2.1 when automatic officiating equipment is used for timing of competitions in accordance with rule SW 11, microchip transponder technology capable of providing split times is mandatory and should be added to the equipment. Use of microchip transponder technology is mandatory for competitions at the World Championships and Olympic Games. Microchip transponder timing technology will be recorded officially in tenths of seconds. The final places will be determined by the referee based upon the finish judges' report and the finish video tape.

OWS 7.2.2 it is mandatory for all swimmers to wear a microchip transponder on each wrist throughout the race. If a swimmer loses a transponder the race judge or other authorised official, will immediately inform the referee who will instruct the responsible official on the water to issue a replacement transponder. Any swimmer who finishes the race without a transponder will be disqualified.

OWS 7.3 the finish judges and timekeepers shall be placed so as to be able to observe the finish at all times. The area in which they are stationed should be for their exclusive use.

OWS 7.4 every effort should be made to ensure that the swimmers' representative can get from the escort safety craft to meet the swimmer as they leave the water.

OWS 7.5 upon leaving the water some swimmers may require assistance. Swimmers should only be touched or handled if they clearly display a need, or ask for assistance.

OWS 7.6 a member of the medical team should inspect the swimmers as they leave the water. A chair, in which the swimmer can sit while an assessment is made, should be provided.

OWS 7.7 once cleared by the medical member, swimmers should be given access to refreshment.

*Guidance: The full finish apparatus described here will only be found at FINA events and home internationals.*

*A swim-through finish will be used at many events, this allows the competitors to touch the finish apparatus and carry on through thus clearing the area for the other finishers.*

*The clerk of the course will be at the finish to help any swimmer who needs assistance along with the swimmer's representative. ( See OWS 3.49)*

### **AUTOMATIC OFFICIATING EQUIPMENT**

*Automatic officiating equipment used for Open Water events is not the same as that used in a pool. The touch pad cannot identify the swimmer who touched, it can only record a series of times. The video cameras should be used in conjunction with the times from the touchpad and the finish judges' placings to establish the results. This should be used to check the finish order and times recorded from the microchip transponders. Any discrepancies between these two can then be resolved. If there are no discrepancies the microchip results will be used.*

*Times shall be recorded to 0.1 sec.*

*Should a swimmer be disqualified during or following an event, such disqualification should be recorded in the official results, but no time or place shall be recorded or announced.*

### **General Guidance**

*A referee should be fully conversant with the duties and powers of each official at all times.*

*Although, at present, training in the operation of Automatic Officiating Equipment (AOE) is not part of the programme for the open water referee course, it is a requirement that referees have a working understanding of what the AOE can provide in the form of printouts and displays and how these can be compared to the manual timings and places and the evidence provided by the video recording of the finish.*

*It should not be forgotten that the referee is responsible for declaring the result although much of the work of preparing the result will be done by the chief finish judge working with the chief timekeeper and the chief judge.*

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The referee is responsible for the safe conduct of all activities in those parts of the event site essential for the running of the competition.
- The referee is responsible to ensure that minimum water depths, water quality, strength of any currents and weather conditions as well shore facilities comply with current requirements.
- The referee is responsible to ensure that all officials are briefed prior to the competition on the safety arrangements and on any general safety matters (e.g. evacuation procedures) required by the site owner/operator.
- The referee should stop a competition proceeding at any stage if any of the required facilities, equipment, personnel and procedures become deficient and report it to the Promoter or his deputy.

### Duties of all persons

Any person participating in any activity organised by an affiliated club, body or organisation including, but not being limited to, any promoter, competitor, official or spectator at any competition in any swimming discipline held under FINA Rules shall comply with the following:

- any relevant statutory Health and Safety requirements;
- any bye laws or other regulations relating to safety;
- the conditions of any hire agreement relating to safety;
- safety instructions or guidance issued by the National Governing Body or site owner including the written operating procedures and emergency evacuation procedure.

Take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions within the area for which the promoter, hirer or organiser of the activity is responsible.

### Duties of the promoter

The promoter of a competition shall have overall responsibility for the observance and enforcement of the safety requirements and his duties shall include but not be limited to the following.

The promoter shall:

- agree with the owner/operator the areas for which the promoter, as hirer, is responsible;
- produce written operating procedures and have them available for reference during the period of hire;
- make arrangements for the implementation of relevant sections of the written operating procedures (as required by the hire agreement) during the period of hire;
- brief the referee(s) on the relevant sections of the written operating procedures and the promoter's conditions prior to the competition;
- ensure before a competition is permitted to start that first aid and safety equipment is in place and ready and available for immediate use and that staff who are qualified to operate it are on duty.
- ensure safety arrangements are in place before any participants are permitted to enter the water.
- prevent a competition starting if any of the required facilities and safety arrangements are absent or deficient
- be present throughout the competition or, for any period(s) in which he is not present, appoint a deputy to exercise the full powers of the promoter;

*Guidance: for open water events the promoter must carry out a risk assessment and produce a risk register as part of an overall **safety case**. This safety case must be produced each time an event is run. It is not possible to have a standard safety case which is used year after year without review. This safety case will contain the equivalent of a normal operating procedure and an emergency operating procedure*

### Duties of officials and stewards

Any official or steward shall be under the control of the chief referee at all times and, shall report immediately to the referee(s) anything that appears to him to breach, or be likely to breach, the safety regulations.

## DIVING STARTS

The water depth must be 1.4 metres minimum, (see OWS 5.4) thus a diving start should be possible at most events. However it is advised that at least 2 metres depth be provided at a start where the swimmers will commence with a dive.

## **DISABILITY SWIMMING**

Increasingly athletes with a disability are taking part in open water events throughout the country.

All athletes who are registered should have either, a Certificate of Swimming Disability (CSD) or a Functional Ability Card (FAC). These must be given/shown to the referee prior to the start of the session/event otherwise they will not be accepted in the event of disqualification. It should be noted that athletes with disabilities may not have an FAC in which case the disability liaison official will advise the referee.

An FAC states the exceptions afforded to them under IPC Swimming rules. Athletes are classified according to their level of functional ability.

A Certificate of Swimming Disability is issued to an athlete by the British Swimming Head of Medical Services and will indicate the exceptions afforded in relation to FINA rules.

Meets that include disability events should have in the meet information that it is also swum under IPC Swimming rules to allow athletes with a disability the benefit of their exceptions as listed on their FAC or CSD. They should also have a Technical Advisor or Disability Liaison Official to assist the referee.

*Guidance: All open water events are freestyle so there will usually be no functional ability limitations.*

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

At all times referees should be aware of their duty of care to athletes and officials.

Abuse can be in the following categories:

- Physical abuse – someone physically harming or injuring a child
- Sexual abuse – forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, wither or not the person is aware of what is happening
- Neglect – failure of care to a child resulting in the serious impairment of the child's health
- Emotional abuse – no love encouragement or help given to child and/or constantly derided or ridiculed or ignored, conversely it can occur if a child is over protected
- Bullying – deliberate hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time. It can be verbal, written or physical.

Each National Governing Body has its own method of dealing with Child Protection issues.