



**WORKBOOK**

**FOR**

**OPEN WATER LEVEL 1**

Candidate Name.....

Club.....

## Contents

Introduction.....	4
How to Use This Workbook.....	4
Progress forms.....	7
Record of Duties – Comments on session work.....	9
Safety.....	11
Phonetic alphabet.....	13
General rules for Open Water swimming.....	14
Reporting for duty.....	15
General Maxims for Open Water Officials.....	15
Chapter 1 - Timekeeper.....	16
a. Role.....	16
b. Preparation.....	16
c. Duties and equipment.....	16
d. Procedure for recording a time.....	16
e. FINA rules for Timekeepers.....	17
f. Tips for Timekeepers.....	18
g. Timekeeper review questions.....	20
Chapter 2 – Chief Timekeeper.....	21
a. Role.....	21
b. Responsibilities.....	21
c. Equipment.....	21
d. Duties before the race.....	21
e. Duties after the race.....	21
f. FINA rules for Chief Timekeepers.....	22
g. Tips for Chief Timekeepers.....	22
h. Chief Timekeeper review questions.....	23
Duties of Judges- General.....	24
Chapter 3 - Turn Judge.....	25
a. Role, Responsibilities and Duties.....	25
b. Equipment.....	25
c. FINA rules for Turn Judges.....	25
d. Reporting infringements.....	26
e. Tips for Turn Judges.....	26

Chapter 4 - Finish Judge.....	28
a. Role.....	28
b. Responsibilities.....	28
c. Equipment.....	28
d. Duties.....	28
e. FINA rules for Finish Judges.....	29
f. Reporting infringements.....	29
g. Tips for Finish Judges.....	29
h. Finish Judge review questions.....	30
Chapter 5 – Feeding Platform Judge .....	31
a. Role & Responsibilities .....	31
b. Equipment .....	31
c. Duties.....	31
e. FINA rules for Feeding Platform Judges .....	32
f. Reporting infringements.....	32
g. Tips for Feeding Platform Judges .....	32
h. Platform Judge review questions .....	34
Open Water Rules, and By-Laws.....	35
FINA Open water swimming rules .....	35
FINA Open Water By-Laws.....	37
FINA General rules concerning swimwear .....	38
FINA Bye Laws concerning costumes .....	38
Masters Open Water Swimming Rules (MOWS) .....	39
World Masters Championships .....	40
World Championship programme of events .....	40
Appendices - Sample Forms .....	41
Judges/Timekeepers record form - instructions .....	41
Judges/Timekeepers record form.....	42
Turn Judge .....	43
Warning / Disqualification Report.....	44
Incident Reporting Form.....	46

## Introduction

Welcome to the first stage of officiating for Open Water swimming. When you have completed this booklet, you will be qualified as an Open Water Level 1 official. This will enable you to officiate as a Timekeeper, Chief Timekeeper, Turn Judge, Finish Judge and Feeding Platform Judge.

British Swimming thanks you for the time and effort you will be giving to the sport and hopes you will gain both enjoyment and fulfilment as you progress as an open water technical official. It is only through the commitment of yourself and others that competition at all levels can take place.

Initially there will be a group workshop session, which will be taken by an open water trainer. The trainer will go over the workbook in detail, explaining how your development and assessment will be carried out, and what will be expected of candidates during this period. The responsibilities of Timekeeper, Chief Timekeeper, Turn Judge, Feeding Platform Judge and Finish Judge will also be discussed.

A mentor will sign off the Record of Progress form for the initial group session. Any comments relevant to a candidate's progress to date should also be noted in the comments section.

Candidates should then start to complete the record of duties forms. Sessions as Timekeeper must be completed before progressing onto Chief Timekeeper.

Candidates and mentors should meet and record each sessions' conclusions, discuss progress made, and highlight any action points needed.

When the record of duties form has been completed the candidate should meet with their mentor to complete the remaining review questions, (do not complete the workbook prior to the meeting). Remember, the completion of the workbook should be done by the candidate in an **"independent and autonomous"** manner – simulating actual open water conditions.

On completion of the workbook and training each candidate should meet with a nominated Referee, on a one to one basis, for a review of their training and as to their suitability to gain the qualification of Open Water Level 1

## How to Use This Workbook

### **Its Purpose**

This workbook is your reference book for the course and afterwards. It contains a wealth of helpful information, best practice details and reference material together with a record (when maintained) of your progress and the events that you worked at along the way.

It is your record, not that of the Course Leader or your Mentor, and apart from pages 7 and 8, which will be removed for officials' management, it stays with you and should prove to be a useful information source for several years to come.

### **Stages of Training**

There are 7 stages of training associated with the Open Water Level 1 (OWL1) qualification. These are:

1. Initial Group Workshop covering the specific Open Water Level 1 role and FINA rules
2. Open Water Practice/Experience – Timekeeper
3. Open Water Practice/Experience – Chief Timekeeper
4. Open Water Practice/Experience – Turn Judge

5. Open Water Practice/Experience – Finish Judge
6. Question and Answer session – Feeding Platform Judge
7. Final Assessment and sign-off

## **Help & Assistance**

Candidate training is conducted with the active involvement of the event Referee and an assigned Mentor for each period of training. The Mentor will be an experienced qualified official.

## **Record of Duties**

Feedback from the Mentor and Referee should be provided and recorded for each element and period.

## **Training Time**

The length of training time is dependent upon the knowledge and experience of the Candidate. It is considered that each competency element of the Open Water Level 1 training should in most circumstances be able to be completed in approximately 2 or 3 periods of practical experience/mentoring for each duty. Prior qualification and experience as a Pool Judge Level 1, Judge Level 2, or Referee is likely to assist in reducing the overall time taken to achieve full competence in the identified areas;

## **Competence**

The Candidate is expected to achieve an acceptable level of competence in all the areas set out in this workbook. When a Licensed Open Water Referee is satisfied that an acceptable level of competency has been achieved they should sign off the competency to indicate this achievement. In all cases however, regardless of prior pool experience or level of qualification, practical assessments of each competency must be conducted at an Open Water event.

The Open Water Level 1 Competency Sign-Off record sheet shows the 5 sections that need to be certified by a Licensed Open Water Referee when the Candidate achieves the desired standard. Due to the infrequency with which the role is performed, the competency relating to Feeding Platform Judge will be determined by a question and answer session with a Licensed Open Water Referee.

## **Progression**

When all the competency areas are achieved the Candidate should be referred back to their Course Leader in order to complete their final assessment.

## **Training Records**

The “Record of Duties” sheets are to be accurately completed as the Candidate’s development progresses. Training should be flexible, it is not necessary to work sequentially down the list of roles; though Timekeeper should be undertaken prior to Chief Timekeeper. Each development opportunity and competency are to be individually recorded on a separate line. If all lines become filled but individual areas remain unvalidated on the Competency Sign-Off record, additional “Record of Duty” sheets should be added by the Candidate.

Candidate comments and feedback from the Mentor and Referee are required entries, they are there to record the Candidate’s understanding and progress in each Competency area.

## Mentoring

During all periods of training the Candidate should be mentored in order to ensure they have a firm understanding of the practical aspects of the role. As training progresses the Mentor should support rather than lead the Candidate, assisting and directing as required.

Training for Mentoring is provided via a specific CPD module and is available to all officials irrespective of grade and is an inclusive process into which all officials are invited to participate, not just to increase their overall knowledge of the sport and its rules, but also to develop, improve and disseminate collective best practice.

Mentoring is Development NOT Assessment.

British Swimming delivers a separate CPD module on Mentoring and details of this can be found on the British Swimming website or from your Regional Training Coordinator.

## Additional Resources

Links to a number of relevant documents, including warning and disqualification reports, can be found in the dedicated web area at

<https://www.britishswimming.org/browse-sport/swimming/officials/open-water/>

FINA rules, announcements from British Swimming, and general resources can be accessed through the links provided at

<https://www.britishswimming.org/browse-sport/swimming/officials/general-resources/> .

In addition, the British Swimming website offers you access to information on topics such as continuing professional development, officials licensing or additional qualifications.

To ensure you do not miss out on any forthcoming officiating news and information simply type

<https://www.swimmingresults.org/officialsnews/>

into your browser and register to receive emailed updates, including invitations to apply to officiate at National events. To register for Swimming Officials News all you will need is your British Swimming registration number and an email address.

General officiating queries may be directed to [helen.akers@swimming.org](mailto:helen.akers@swimming.org) .

## Progress forms

# Record of Progress Open Water Level 1

<b>District/Region:</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</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Workshop Session</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Co-ordinator</b>	<b>Referee</b>
1	Initial Group Session			
	<b>Comments</b>			
2	Workbook Completion Session (On completion of Competency Sign-Off Form)			
	<b>Comments</b>			
3	Final Referee/Mentor Comments			
	<b>General Comments of Mentor:</b>			
<b>Signed:</b> <b>(Mentor)</b>		<b>Signed:</b> <b>(Candidate)</b>		

# Record of Duties

## Open Water Level 1 Competency Sign-Off

Each module to be signed off when the Referee is satisfied that the candidate has displayed competence in the duty

<b>District/Region:</b>					
<b>Name:</b>				<b>Reg No:</b>	
	Competency	Date Achieved	OW Referee's Name	Signature:	Reg No:
1	Timekeeper				
2	Chief Timekeeper				
3	Turn Judge				
4	Finish Judge				
5	Feeding Platform Judge (Question & Answer session)				

### Competency Sign-Off

Competency certification is a key element of the candidates training, as it records progress as well as the attainment of skill and competency of performance to the accepted standard.

**Only Licensed Open Water Referees may sign-off a competency.** Licensed Open Water Referees are entrusted with maintaining an acceptable standard **and are reminded that they should not sign-off competencies unless they are satisfied that the Candidate can perform at the accepted standard unaided.** They should not sign competencies based upon the number of events worked or number of separate times a competency area has been covered.

Before signing the Competency, the Referee should review the Candidates "Record of Duties" and satisfy themselves that any adverse comment regarding performance of specific duties have been adequately addressed and that no doubt remains regarding skill levels, knowledge, commitment or application.

Each Referee should ask themselves if they are:

- a. Happy to work with this Candidate as part of their event team,
- b. If they would be willing to provide a personal recommendation for the Candidate to other British Swimming Referees.

If the answer to either question is No, they are not to sign-off the Candidate as being competent and additional Candidate training, experience or development should be initiated.



## Record of Duties – Comments on session work

<b>District/Region:</b>			
<b>Candidate Name:</b>		<b>Reg No:</b>	

Date and Event	Competency Area Covered & Candidates Comments					Mentor Comments	Referee Comments
	1	2	3	4	5		
						Name:	Name:
						Reg No.:	Reg No.:
						Name:	Name:
						Reg No.:	Reg No.:
						Name:	Name:
						Reg No.:	Reg No.:
						Name:	Name:
						Reg No.:	Reg No.:
						Name:	Name:
						Reg No.:	Reg No.:

Date and Event	Competency Area Covered & Candidates Comments					Mentor Comments	Referee Comments							
	1	2	3	4	5									
								Name:	Name:					
													Reg No.:	Reg No.:
	1	2	3	4	5									
								Name:	Name:					
													Reg No.:	Reg No.:
	1	2	3	4	5									
								Name:	Name:					
													Reg No.:	Reg No.:
	1	2	3	4	5									
								Name:	Name:					
													Reg No.:	Reg No.:
	1	2	3	4	5									
								Name:	Name:					
													Reg No.:	Reg No.:
	1	2	3	4	5									
								Name:	Name:					
													Reg No.:	Reg No.:

Additional sheets are to be used if a competency area requires further experience to be gained.

## **Safety**

### **The safety of the swimmers is paramount.**

1. In open water, there is a designated Safety Officer, who is responsible for all aspects of safety related to the conduct of the competition. If an emergency situation should occur during an event, the Safety Officer will take charge and all officials will follow the Safety Officer's instructions.
2. In open water, it has to be remembered that the swimmers are spread over a much wider area than in a pool environment. Open water in this country is normally colder than indoor pools or open water abroad, and swimmers are likely to experience currents, changeable weather, and other unfamiliar circumstances.
3. It is therefore imperative that every official is alert to the possibility of a swimmer in distress.
4. All swimmers have to attend a safety briefing before being allowed to compete in an open water event. They will be informed that they should lie on their backs and wave with one hand if they are in difficulties, and a rescue boat will be sent to pick them up. However, this system relies upon someone observing them, and acting on that observation.
5. Note: At national and international events the coaches are given the safety briefing, and are expected to pass this information on to their swimmers.
6. An official seeing a swimmer in distress should immediately, where available, use their radio to summon help. They should give, as accurately as possible, the position of the swimmer, and if possible, the swimmer's race number to the Safety Officer who will then co-ordinate any required action. If there is a canoeist in the vicinity they should support the swimmer until the rescue boat arrives.
7. Officials should be proactive. If they see a swimmer who seems to be confused, constantly changing strokes, or acting in a manner that gives cause for concern, they should check on the condition of the swimmer. If there is any doubt, or if the official is too far away to communicate effectively with the swimmer, they must communicate their concern to the Referee on the water or the Safety Officer, using a radio if available. Likewise, if an official observes a previously unnoticed or new hazard on the course, which could endanger swimmers, then they should immediately report it to the Safety Officer.
8. At some venues, certain officials may be issued with throw ropes. It is essential that you know how to use one. If in doubt, the official should consult a more experienced colleague before the event starts. All officials issued with a throw rope should carry out a test throw of the rope and rewind it themselves.
9. Lifejackets must be worn by all officials on a pontoon or in a boat. It is essential that the lifejacket is fitted correctly and you should consult a more experienced colleague if you are unsure. Lifejackets **MUST** be worn outside all other clothing.
10. Swimming courses for open water events can cover a wide area, where the only effective means of communication is by radio. Radios are normally issued to the Chief Referee, additional race Referees, Safety Officer, Course Officer, Medical Officer, Race Judges, rescue boats, Clerk of the Course and Turn Judges.

11. Radios are a safety tool and should not be used for casual conversation but reserved for essential messages. If you are issued with a radio and have never used one before, you need to inform the Safety Officer who will explain how to use it.
12. At all times, you refer to yourself and others by the official position you are undertaking, not by your name. For example: "Referee, Referee, this is Turn Judge 3" not "John this is Mary".
13. Before the event starts the Safety Officer will conduct a radio check. They will start with a general message "All stations this is the Safety Officer - radio check, over". When the Safety Officer calls your position, you should respond "Safety Officer, this is Turn Judge 3, received loud and clear". If you do not respond, the Safety Officer will assume you cannot hear them and will investigate.
14. When the Safety Officer has completed checks with all stations they will announce "All stations loud and clear, radio check complete".
15. In the event of an emergency the Safety Officer will announce "All stations, minimise" In this case you are to only use your radio if it is absolutely necessary, following an instruction or request from the Safety Officer, and relevant to the emergency situation. When the emergency situation has been dealt with, the Safety Officer will announce "All stations, cease minimise".
16. It should be noted that the Safety Officer is in charge of any emergencies that occur and will issue instructions to deal with them.
17. Before starting your call, you should always check that nobody else is transmitting. When sending a message, you should start with the identity of the person you are calling, followed by your identity. E.g. "Safety Officer, Safety Officer this is Turn Judge 1, over". It is usual to wait for a response from your target before you send the body of your message.

## USEFUL RADIO PROCEDURAL WORDS:

- Over:** Invitation to reply  
**Out:** End of transmission  
**Received:** Acknowledgement of message  
**Say again:** Repeat your message please

Remember you press the “push to talk” (PTT) button to speak and release it to receive an answer. When pressing the button, pause for one or two seconds before talking. This ensures that your first words will be transmitted. The radio needs a short time to establish the transmission mode, so pausing before you speak allows this to happen.

Release the button when you have finished, allowing other people to transmit to you. Holding the button down when not speaking effectively blocks the channel for other users.

Never use jargon. e.g.: “Roger”, “10-4”, or “over and out” etc.

## Phonetic alphabet

A	Alpha	T	Tango
B	Bravo	U	Uniform
C	Charlie	V	Víctor
D	Delta	W	Whiskey
E	Echo	X	X-ray
F	Foxtrot	Y	Yankee
G	Golf	Z	Zulu
H	Hotel	<b>Numbers</b>	
I	India	0	Zero (not Oh)
J	Juliet	1	Wun
K	Kilo	2	Two
L	Lima	3	Tree
M	Mike	4	Fower
N	November	5	Fife
O	Oscar	6	Six
P	Papa	7	Seven
Q	Quebec	8	Ait
R	Romeo	9	Niner
S	Sierra		

# General rules for Open Water swimming

These notes, and those to be found later in this document, have been compiled using the rules governing Open Water Swimming Competitions which are set by the Federation Internationale De Natation –(FINA) and are reproduced below and available on the FINA website. <http://fina.org/content/fina-rules-regulations>

## 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 1.2** The age limit for all FINA Open Water Swimming events must be at least 14 years of age. The age for all competitors will be considered as at 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year of the competition.

## OWS 2 OFFICIALS

**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 event with a course of 10km or less

Turn Judges (one per alteration of Course)

Feeding Platform Judge (when feeding platforms are used)

Starter

Announcer

Recorders

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

## **Reporting for duty**

1. All technical officials should wear suitable clothing when attending at any open water swimming event. Weather in Britain can be changeable, and layers of clothes, including waterproofs, are recommended;
2. You may be requested by the event organisers to wear a specific uniform. This is acceptable provided it complies with the advertising conventions specified by FINA;
3. You should ensure you have at least two pens (one as a spare), preferably black or blue ink.
4. You should report to the Chief Referee at least 30 minutes prior to the officials' briefing of the event, (unless you have been informed otherwise). This briefing will be conducted by the Chief Referee or nominated official.

## **General Maxims for Open Water Officials**

1. Safety is Paramount
2. The swimmer always gets the benefit of any doubt

# Chapter 1 - Timekeeper

## a. Role

1. Timing is a swimmer's measure of performance. The role of a Timekeeper is to accurately determine the time it took each swimmer to cover the distance of the event.
2. A Timekeeper must know the FINA rules and be able to apply them uniformly.
3. Final placement of the swimmers in each event is determined by their finish order supported by their times. Therefore, precision and accuracy are important for Timekeepers.

## b. Preparation

1. You should ensure you have a watch with at least a 100-split capability. Most event organisers now equip Timekeepers with a watch having a memory and print out capability; this watch must be used if provided;
2. After the officials briefing, the Chief Referee will pass you to the Chief Timekeeper to whom you are responsible during the event.

## c. Duties and equipment

1. The Chief Timekeeper will confirm which competitors you are responsible for timing. This may be all competitors, or only a particular group. This group may be defined by age, sex or distance to be swum. At most events in this country, competitors are given coloured hats so that the group they are in can be identified more easily;
2. All manual watches need to have a minimum 100 split capability. Check that the following functions are working correctly on your watch and that you know how to use them:
  - a) start;
  - b) stop;
  - c) return to zero (resets);
  - d) recall split times;
  - e) can you recall splits whilst the watch is still running?
3. The Chief Timekeeper should provide you with a start sheet or a programme, and a result sheet on which to record your times;
4. Timekeepers may be issued with a watch with a printout capability. In this case, you should have its function explained to you. Make sure you understand how to use it prior to the event.

### NOTES

1. *Where Automatic Officiating Equipment (AOE) is being used, swimmers must wear transponders which interact with this equipment, to provide a signal when they touch the finish apparatus on completion of their swim. Transponders are normally worn on each wrist. If one is lost during the race, swimmers should obtain a replacement from the Referee, or nominated official, on the water.*

## d. Procedure for recording a time

1. Before the event commences the Timekeepers assemble at the start; in a position where they can view the starter and / or hear the starting signal.
2. On hearing the first long whistle Timekeepers must listen and watch intently for the starting signal.



3. When the starting signal is given, Timekeepers must:

- a. Start the watch;
- b. Check that the watch is running.
- c. If the watch fails to start, or stops during a race, a Timekeeper must inform the Chief Timekeeper immediately.
- d. At each finish the Timekeeper will record a time, using the split function of their watch.
- e. As the swimmer approaches the end of the race, the Timekeeper prepares to take each swimmer's time by looking at the overhead finish apparatus, or other structure, which the swimmer will touch to finish the race.
- f. Do not try to anticipate the swimmer finishing, make sure you actually see the swimmer touch the structure then immediately press the button. The Timekeeper presses the split button for each swimmer who touches until the last swimmer has finished; the watch must not be stopped until the Chief Timekeeper gives clearance to do so.
- g. Immediately after the completion of the event, the Timekeeper will submit a signed record of their times, using either the watch print-out, or a transcription from their watch split times onto a form.
- h. The only time that an individual Timekeeper can declare is the one recorded on their own watch. If you are aware of a discrepancy between your times and those of other Timekeepers, you are to inform the Chief Timekeeper.
- i. The Chief Timekeeper will collect the signed recorded times from the Timekeepers to produce the official time of each swimmer.

#### **e. FINA rules for Timekeepers**

**Timekeepers shall:**

**OWS 3.16** Take the time of each swimmer/s 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.

#### **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 Chief 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's command "take your marks" they shall take up a starting position immediately in line with the start line where a platform is not used, or 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 Chief 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 7 THE FINISH OF THE RACE (extract)**

**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 Chief 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 Chief Referee who will instruct the responsible Official on the water to issue a replacement transponder. Any swimmer who finishes the race without at least one transponder will be disqualified.

### **f. Tips for Timekeepers**

1. Do not cheer or coach swimmers during a race;
2. Refer any questions to the Chief Timekeeper;
3. Know the distance of the event in the water, and the number of laps to be swum;
4. Record the time on your watch accurately on your record sheet. Times should be recorded to one tenth of a second unless instructed otherwise; **(an example of this form can be found on page 42)**
5. Do not divulge the time to the swimmer;
6. Only give information to the Chief Timekeeper or Referee;
7. Remember that you will be working outside and bring appropriate clothing and skin protection (e.g. Sunscreen), bearing in mind the weather may be changeable;

8. Timekeepers must be at the start and be prepared to travel to the finish area if this is at a different location;
9. During the race, check with your fellow Timekeepers, when time allows, to ensure you have recorded the same number of finishers. If not, make a note and inform the Chief Timekeeper.

### **NOTES**

1. *All swimmers entered into a competition will be provided with a number for the event they are to swim. This is the swimmer's entry/identity for each swim, and must be displayed on the arms, upper backs, and on backs of the hands. At some events, swimmers may be issued with a hat with their number on.*
2. *Prior to each start, the Clerk of the Course will signal to the swimmers at suitable intervals the time remaining before the start. This will start at 15 minutes then 10, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1-minute warnings will be given that the race is about to get underway. They will then instruct the swimmers to either enter the water for a water start, or take up their positions on the pontoon for a dive start. The Referee will give a short series of whistles, followed by a long whistle, indicating that they should prepare for the start. When the Referee is happy that the swimmers are ready the referee will point their flag at the starter, who will raise their flag to the vertical position. The starter will start the race by simultaneously bringing down the flag and giving an audible signal.*
3. *The start position may be some distance from the finish area, Timekeepers must be at the start position and must then be able to travel to the finish area with plenty of time before the first swimmer finishes.*

**g. Timekeeper review questions**

1. How many Timekeepers are required for an event?

---

---

2. Where should Timekeepers stand at the start of the race?

---

---

---

3. What two types of watch are used for open water events?

---

---

---

4. If automatic officiating equipment is being used, what will a swimmer wear in addition to normal swimwear?

---

---

---

5. When should the Timekeeper stop their watch?

---

---

---

6. To whom should the Timekeeper report any timing issues?

---

---

## Chapter 2 – Chief Timekeeper

### a. Role

1. The Chief Timekeeper's role is to ensure that the Timekeepers perform their duties correctly and provide them with the necessary equipment to perform these duties.
2. Chief Timekeepers must know the FINA Rules and be able to apply them uniformly.
3. On completion of an event the Chief Timekeeper will collect each Timekeeper's records and use the information to determine an official time for each swimmer.

### b. Responsibilities

The Chief Timekeeper will:

1. Be responsible for ensuring all Timekeepers fulfil their duties throughout the event;
2. Allocate the Timekeepers to their positions for the start and finish;
3. Provide the Timekeepers with a confirmed number of swimmers starting the event, and keep them updated of the numbers in the water throughout the event, as swimmers withdraw;
4. Determine and record the official manual time for each swimmer on the appropriate form.

### c. Equipment

The following equipment should be provided to the Chief Timekeeper by the Promoter/Referee:

1. List of Timekeepers;
2. Corrected programmes or start sheets for each event;
3. Sufficient stopwatches for all Timekeepers; with or without a print-out capability;
4. Sign out/sign in sheet for the stopwatches where appropriate.

### d. Duties before the race

The Chief Timekeeper shall:

1. Instruct Timekeepers on the operation of any watch provided;
2. Carry out a time check;
3. Allocate each Timekeeper to their positions for the start and finish of the event;
4. Confirm to the Timekeepers the number of swimmers, hat colour(s) and number of laps;
5. Provide a sheet to record times, if required. **An example of this can be seen on page 42 of this booklet.**

### e. Duties after the race

After each race the Chief Timekeeper shall:

1. Collect the time records from each Timekeeper;
2. Check the times recorded are correct for the number of swimmers completing the event;

3. Consult with the Chief Finish Judge to consolidate the times with the Finish Judges' placings;
4. Counter-sign the agreed record;
5. When the result has been decided make sure all the annotated signed records from Timekeepers are given to the Chief Referee.

#### **f. FINA rules for Chief Timekeepers**

##### **The Chief Timekeeper shall:**

**OWS 3.12** Assign at least two 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, inspects their watches.

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

*Note: OWS 3.13 refers to synchronising watches. FINA does **not** use official running clocks and there is nothing that can be synchronised to. When required, digital clocks with large displays for the spectators, will be started at the time of the event start as will all of the Timekeeper's watches.*

#### **g. Tips for Chief Timekeepers**

1. When briefing the Timekeepers, ensure they are aware that the watches must not be stopped during the race; they must wait for your signal to stop watches after the last swimmer has finished.
2. Start an additional watch in case one of the Timekeepers needs a replacement watch.
3. After a race has started check with the Timekeepers to ensure that none are requiring a replacement watch.
4. Be aware of any withdrawals, and make sure the information is passed to the Timekeepers.
5. As a race is nearing completion be aware that a Timekeeper may require a replacement watch.
6. Keep a spare watch running until the last swimmer has touched to provide backup for all Timekeepers.
7. Collect all Timekeeper record sheets at the end of the race and ensure that all watches signed out are signed back in again.
8. You may be given a radio, make sure you understand how to use it correctly.
9. If asked by the Recorders for the times of the swimmers who have completed the event so far, refer them to the Chief Referee for direction. If it is agreed, make a note of those times and provide them on a separate sheet; do not hand over your original record of times, or tear bits off the printer timer record. These should be kept intact to hand to the Chief Referee.

## **h. Chief Timekeeper review questions**

1. How many Timekeepers should the Chief Timekeeper assign to their posts?

---

---

2. What kinds of watches should the Timekeepers have available?

---

---

---

3. What must they collect from each Timekeeper?

---

---

4. Under FINA rules, what watches should be used?

---

---

---

5. If Automatic officiating equipment is used for timing, what must the swimmer wear in addition to normal swimwear and where?

---

---

---

6. Regarding Q5. If the swimmer loses the item(s) worn, what happens?

---

---

---

---

## Duties of Judges- General

1. All Judges must know the FINA Rules and be able to apply them uniformly.
2. The Chief Referee is responsible for approving the duties of all the Officials. The Chief Referee shall provide each Official with a corrected programme and/or start sheet and a note of any special features or regulations of the event.
3. The Chief Finish Judge assigns each Judge to a position prior to the commencement of the race
4. Technical officials shall ensure fair and equitable competition for all swimmers;
5. A Judge must be decisive, and having made a decision, be prepared to justify it. Any swimmer who clearly contravenes the rules must be reported to the Chief Referee as soon as possible, usually by radio, and confirmed in writing at the end of the event. **Form on Page 44**. If there is any question that the rules have been broken the swimmer must be given the benefit of the doubt;
6. Judges must be alert and concentrate at all times. Discussions with swimmers, coaches, or others not involved in officiating at the event, may distract the Judge from the job in hand. Any queries regarding the conduct of the event should be directed to the Chief Referee.



## Chapter 3 - Turn Judge

### a. Role, Responsibilities and Duties

1. Turn Judges must know the FINA rules and be able to apply them uniformly.
2. Ensure they have a clear view of their assigned alteration of the course (turn)
3. They should observe swimmers to verify conformity with the rules and report any infringement when the rules are broken.
4. Turn Judges shall ensure fair and equitable competition for all swimmers.
5. As a safety check, where possible, Turn Judges should record the number of each swimmer who passes their turn on the appropriate form (*see appendices*).
6. If this is not practicable, the Turn Judge should record the total number of swimmers passing their turn.
7. Report to the Chief Referee any swimmer who is seen to take unfair advantage or commit unsporting impediment on another swimmer at the turn
8. Before the competition commences the Chief Referee briefs each Turn Judge on their responsibilities.
9. Be vigilant in case a swimmer is in difficulties.

### b. Equipment

The Judge should be provided with the following equipment:

1. A program or start sheets.
2. A note of any special features of the course.
3. A diagram of the course, including the direction of swim and clear indications of which way round the buoys or turning points the swimmers should be going;
4. Record sheets to mark off the swimmers as they pass each lap.

### c. FINA rules for Turn Judges

Turn Judges shall:

**OWS 3.31** 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 3.32** record any infringement of the Turn procedures on the record sheets provided and indicate the infringement at the time by blasts on a whistle then immediately communicate the infringement to the Chief Referee.

**OWS 3.33** promptly upon completion of the event deliver the signed record sheet to the Chief Finish Judge.

#### **d. Reporting infringements**

1. Any infringements spotted should be reported as soon as possible, by radio, to the Chief Referee.
2. A written report, describing the infringement should be given to the Chief Referee as soon as is practicable, or at the end of the event. [See the Disqualification/Warning report on Page 44](#)

#### **e. Tips for Turn Judges**

1. Turn Judges will normally be issued with radios – make sure you know how to use it correctly;
2. Turn Judges may be issued with throw ropes, klaxons for emergency evacuation, and blankets for swimmers leaving the water;
3. If you are issued with a throw rope, make sure you know how to use it. You should undo it, test it and coil it correctly before the start of the race. If you are not confident in the use of it, have some more practice throws before the race commences;
4. Always have a copy of the start list, and ensure any withdrawals are recorded as they are reported;
5. Make sure you have a recording sheet; [\( An example can be found on page 43 of this booklet\).](#)
6. Count the swimmers past your turn, and if possible, record their numbers; this information may help sort the result of the event should it have to be abandoned;
7. When the last swimmer has passed your turn for the final time, report in to the Chief Referee and request permission to leave your post;
8. If possible have a pair of binoculars to help you see swimmers and swimmers' numbers.
9. It is preferable to have two Judges at a turn, one to spot the swimmers whilst the other records their number.

**f. Turn Judge review questions**

1. When must a Turn Judge report for duty and to whom?

---

---

---

2. When does a Turn Judge get told where they should be positioned and by whom?

---

---

---

3. What should the Turn Judge record?

---

---

---

---

---

4. To whom and how should they indicate any infringements?

---

---

## Chapter 4 - Finish Judge

### a. Role

1. Finish Judges must know the FINA Rules and be able to apply them uniformly.
2. They shall ensure there is a fair and equitable competition for all swimmers.
3. They should observe swimmers to verify conformity with the rules and report any infringements to the Chief Referee.

### b. Responsibilities

A finish Judge will:

1. Ensure that the numbers on the swimmers finishing are recorded in the correct order on the recording sheet.
2. Pass any information recorded to the Chief Finish Judge.
3. Inform the Chief Finish Judge to report to the Chief Referee any swimmer who is seen to take unfair advantage or commit unsporting impediment on another swimmer at the finish.
4. Record any infringement of the finish procedures on the correct form.

**NOTE:** *Finish Judges shall not act as Timekeepers in the same event.*

### c. Equipment

Each Finish Judge should be provided with the following equipment:

1. A program or start sheets.
2. Judges record form;
3. A diagram of the course including: the direction of swim, clear indications of how the swimmers approach and enter the finish funnel, plus exactly how they have been instructed to finish;

### d. Duties

1. The Chief Finish Judge will confirm which competitors you are responsible for recording as they finish. This may be all competitors, or only a particular group. This may be defined by age, sex or distance to be swum. At most events in this country, competitors are given coloured hats so that the group they are in can be identified more easily.
2. Watch all swimmers as they approach the finish to ensure they do so safely and fairly.
3. Observe carefully that no swimmer is impeded or disadvantaged.
4. Record the finishing order.
5. Report any infringements to the Chief Referee via the Chief Finish Judge (radio operator).
6. Be vigilant in case a swimmer is in difficulties.

## e. FINA rules for Finish Judges

### Finish Judges (two) 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.

## 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 from each side and above by a video system with slow motion and recall facilities including timing equipment.

*Note: Finish Judges shall not act as Timekeepers in the same event*

## f. Reporting infringements

1. This should be done as soon as possible, by radio, to the Chief Referee.
2. A written report, detailing the infringement should be given to the Chief Referee as soon as is practicable, or at the end of the event **This can be found on page 44 of this booklet.**

## g. Tips for Finish Judges

1. Make sure you know which swimmers you are recording and how to identify them.
2. Make sure you know exactly how the swimmers are due to finish. This could be by touching a fixed object or swimming between two points.
3. Be clear about how many laps of the course your swimmers will do.
4. Ensure you have the right form to record your finish on.
5. Always have a copy of the start list, and ensure any withdrawals are recorded as they are reported.
6. During the race, when time allows, check with your fellow Finish Judge to ensure you have both recorded the same number of swimmers who have finished.
7. Be aware of the number of swimmers still to finish, so that you can spot the final swimmers as they approach.
8. Direct any queries to the Chief Finish Judge.

## **h. Finish Judge review questions**

1. How many Finish Judges should there be?

---

---

2. What apparatus should be used at the finish?

---

---

---

3. How should the final approach and finish be marked?

---

---

---

4. What should you do if you see an infringement?

---

---

---

5. What should you do with your result sheet at the end of the event?

---

---

6. Are you allowed to also act as Timekeeper?

---

---

7. Are you allowed to act as Turn Judge?

---

---

## Chapter 5 – Feeding Platform Judge

### a. Role & Responsibilities

1. Feeding Platform Judges must know the FINA rules and be able to apply them uniformly.
2. They shall ensure there is a fair and equitable competition for all swimmers.
3. They are responsible for conduct on the platform as well as for the procedures adopted for feeding swimmers
4. Ensure that the platform rules are observed and ensure that feeding poles and their use conform with FINA rules. Platform Judges are responsible for the safety on the platform and checking that the swimmer's representative adheres to the FINA rules.
5. Before the competition commences the Chief Referee briefs each platform Judge on their responsibilities.
6. Ensure that each swimmer executes their feeding as indicated in the competition documents and as given at the pre-race briefing.
7. Report to the Chief Referee any swimmer who is seen to take unfair advantage or commit unsporting impediment on another swimmer at the platform.
8. Report to the Chief Referee any swimmers' representative who is seen violating FINA rules or special conditions for the event. Record any infringement of the platform procedures on the appropriate form

### b. Equipment

The platform Judge should be provided with the following equipment:

1. A program or start sheets.
2. List of the swimmers authorised representatives
3. A note of any special features of the course.
4. A diagram of the course, including the direction of swim and clear indications of which way round the buoys, turning points or feeding platforms the swimmers should be going;

### c. Duties

1. Prior to commencement of the event ensure all feeding apparatus complies with FINA rules;
2. Watch all swimmers as they execute their feed to ensure they do so correctly;
3. Observe carefully that no swimmer is impeded or disadvantaged;
4. Be vigilant in case a swimmer is in difficulties;
5. Be vigilant to watch that the swimmers' representatives on the platform adhere to FINA rules;
6. Report any infringements to the Chief Referee. **Form on page 44.**

## e. FINA rules for Feeding Platform Judges

### EACH Feeding Platform Judge shall:

**OWS 3.55** Be responsible for the management of the activity and the swimmers authorised representatives present on the platform, in accordance with FINA rules.

### In addition, Feeding Platform Judges are to be aware of the following:

**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 Rule OWS 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 6.14** When taking sustenance swimmers may use Rule OWS 6.6 provided Rule OWS 6.7 is not infringed.

**OWS 6.15** No objects can be thrown from the feeding platform to the swimmers, including sustenance. The swimmers shall receive their feeding directly from their representative by a feeding pole or by hand.

**OWS 6.16** 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.

## f. Reporting infringements

1. This should be done as soon as possible, by radio, to the Chief Referee.
2. A written report, detailing the infringement should be given to the Chief Referee as soon as is practicable, or at the end of the event **An example of this form can be found on page 44.**

## g. Tips for Feeding Platform Judges

1. As a feeding platform Judge you will be responsible for the behavior of the coaches on the pontoon.
  - a. No smoking;
  - b. No alcohol;
  - c. No taking drink bottles that do not belong to them;
  - d. No tampering of drink bottles.
2. All personnel on the feeding platform must wear a life preserver at all times. This must be worn outside all other clothes, including waterproofs, so that it can readily be seen;



3. Platform Judges may be issued with throw ropes, klaxons for emergency evacuation, and blankets for swimmers leaving the water. If you are issued with a throw rope, make sure you know how to use it. You should undo it, test it and coil it correctly before the start of the race. If you are not confident in the use of it, have some more practice throws before the race commences;
4. Platform Judges will normally be issued with radios - make sure you know how to use it correctly;
5. Always have a copy of the start list, and ensure any withdrawals are recorded as they are reported;
6. If a coach infringes any of the platform regulations or refuses to comply with the Feeding Platform Judge's instructions, the incident should be reported to the Chief Referee for potential disqualification of their swimmer(s).
7. Normal access to the Feeding Platform is limited to the swimmer's representative (one per swimmer) and Platform judge(s). Other persons may only be permitted onto the platform if this has been briefed prior to the event by the Chief Referee.

## **h. Platform Judge review questions**

1. Name three things you would look for when on the Feeding Pontoon.

---

---

---

2. What is the maximum length of the feeding pole used on the platforms?

---

---

3. What size flag can be hung on a feeding pole?

---

---

4. When should you put on your life preserver?

---

---

5. How many coaches would you expect to be on your platform?

---

---

---

6. Who else will you have on your platform?

---

# Open Water Rules, and By-Laws

## FINA Open water swimming rules

### OWS 6 THE RACE

**OWS 6.1** All Open Water competitions shall be Freestyle events and swimmers are required to complete the whole course, respecting all designated turning buoys and course boundaries.

**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 them 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 Rule OWS 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 (Rule OWS 3.1).

**OWS 6.8** For races where escort boats are used, each escort safety craft shall contain: a Race Judge, a person of the swimmers choice, and the minimum crew required to operate the escort safety craft.

**OWS 6.8.1** 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 6.9** Each safety craft shall contain appropriately qualified safety personnel and the minimum crew required to operate the safety craft.

**OWS 6.10** No swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device which may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy. Approved swimsuit, goggles, a maximum of two (2) caps, nose clip and earplugs may be used.

**OWS 6.11** Swimmers shall be allowed to use grease or other such substances providing these are not, in the opinion of the Referee, excessive.

**OWS 6.12** The pacing of a swimmer by another person entering the water is not permitted.

**OWS 6.13** 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.

**OWS 6.14** When taking sustenance swimmers may use Rule OWS 6.6 provided Rule OWS 6.7 is not infringed.

**OWS 6.15** No objects can be thrown from the feeding platform to the swimmers, including sustenance. The swimmers shall receive their feeding directly from their representative by a feeding pole or by hand.

**OWS 6.16** 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 6.17** In all events, time limits shall apply as follows from the finish time of the first swimmers:

15 minutes per 5km (or part thereof) up to a maximum time limit of 120 minutes.

**OWS 6.17.1** Competitors who do not finish the course within the time limit shall be removed from the water except that the Chief Referee may allow a competitor outside the time limit to complete the course but not be eligible for any points or prizes.

**OWS 6.18** Emergency Abandonment

**OWS 6.18.1** 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 6.18.2** In cases of emergency abandonment for any race longer than 10km, where the race has been underway for at least three (3) hours, the final ranking will be as reported by the Chief Referee. If 3 hours of the race has not been completed, it will be restarted from the beginning at the earliest moment possible.

## **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 from each side and above by a 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 Chief 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 Chief Referee who will instruct the responsible Official on the water to issue a replacement transponder. Any swimmer who finishes the race without at least one transponder will be disqualified.

**OWS 7.2.3** When, at the finish of an Open Water Swimming competition, a vertical wall is available, swimmers must touch the vertical wall to finish the race. Any swimmer who does not touch the vertical wall 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.

## **FINA Open Water By-Laws**

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

#### **BL 9.3.7.1 Entries**

For the Olympic Games and the World 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, 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. Withdrawals can be made up to and including the Teams Technical Meeting but no substitution is permitted.

#### **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 Identification**

In all Open Water events 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 8cm in height. Caps meeting the specifications of BL 7.1.3 are not acceptable except for one (1) manufacturer's logo of a maximum size of 20cm<sup>2</sup> on the front.

#### **BL 9.3.7.4 Finish Approach**

For Olympic Games, World Championships and all FINA events, the Finish Approach (OWS 7.1) is part of the course, and swimmers shall remain within the rows of buoys throughout their approach to the Finish.

#### **BL 9.3.7.5 Team Relay Events**

- Each swimmer shall complete a lap of 1.25 km.
- Swimmers may swim in any sequence, but may only swim once.
- All teams will start together.
- Starting order on the platform will be by random draw.
- There shall be a change-over zone of a minimum of 5 m in width.
- Changeovers shall be made with the following swimmer in the water in their starting position holding the platform.
- Contact on the relay changeover must be visible. The touch, between the swimmers making the changeover, should be made above the water anywhere between the elbow and the hand.
- Swimmers may enter the change-over zone when the previous swimmer is approaching the zone and leave the water immediately at the conclusion of their lap.
- Swimmers shall all wear team caps of the same colour and style.

## **FINA General rules concerning swimwear**

### **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. It is permissible to wear two (2) caps.

**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.

## **FINA Bye Laws concerning costumes**

### **BL 8 SWIMWEAR**

**BL 8.1** All swimwear used at Olympic Games and FINA Events (pool and open water swimming competitions) shall be swimwear approved by FINA in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth in the FINA Requirements for Swimwear Approval (FRSA) issued by the FINA bureau and valid on the date of approval. Following an approval process conducted by the Swimwear Approval Commission, a list of approved swimwear is published by FINA (the Approved List) each year. The Approved List is published each year before December 31 and is valid starting from January 1 of the subsequent year.

**BL 8.2** In pool and open water 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. All swimsuits (including wetsuits for open water competitions) shall comply with the requirements set forth in these By-Laws and the FRSA.

**BL 8.3** For pool swimming competitions swimsuits for men shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee, and for women, shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor below knee. The swimsuits shall be made from textile materials.

**BL 8.4** For open water swimming competitions with water temperature from 20 C swimsuits for both men and women shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the ankle. Subject to these specific shape specifications, swimsuits for open water swimming competitions shall further comply with all other requirements applicable to swimsuits for pool swimming competition.

**BL 8.5** From January 1, 2017, for open water swimming competitions in water with temperature below 20 C, men and women may use either swimsuits (BL 8.4) or wetsuits. When the water temperature is below 18 C, the use of wetsuits is compulsory.

For the purpose of these rules, wetsuits are swimsuits made of material providing thermal insulation. Wetsuits for both men and women shall completely cover torso, back, shoulders and knees. They shall not extend beyond the neck, wrists and ankles.

**BL 8.6** BL 8.1 to BL 8.5 apply also for the masters Open Water competitions.

[NOTE TO BL8.6: It is clarified that swimsuits, respectively wetsuits which fulfil the shape requirement set forth in BL 8.3, respectively BL 8.4 and 8.5 (for open water swimming competitions) 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 notably 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 and wetsuits which expressly fulfil the thickness requirement (for example wetsuit thickness provided by manufacturer). In case of doubt in this respect and when notably such doubt concerns a swimsuit or a wetsuit used at the occasion of a World record, an actual check of the swimsuit or a wetsuit can be required from the competitor or Certifying Official and the swimsuit or a wetsuit is to be forwarded to the FINA Office for submission to an actual control of all or parts of the requirements.]

**BL 8.7** For team events in open water swimming, all swimmers from the same team must wear the same colour caps which shall also comply with the FINA rule BL 9.3.7.3.

## **Masters Open Water Swimming Rules (MOWS)**

Masters Open Water Swimming shall be defined as any event for which the distance is greater than 1500 metres and where entry is restricted to Master swimmers.

The Open Water Swimming Rules in Part IV of the FINA Handbook shall apply to Masters Open Water Swimming with the following exceptions.

**MOWS 1** Masters Open Water Swimming events will be up to 5 km.

**MOWS 2** Age Groups for Open Water Swimming are the same as for Masters Swimming

Individual Events (MSW 1.1)

**MOWS 3** The water temperature shall be measured within 30 minutes before start of race and must be a minimum of 18 C and maximum of 31 C. The water temperature shall be certified by the Safety Officer as measured in as near to the middle of the course as possible at a depth of 40 cm.

**MOWS 4** It shall be compulsory for all swimmers to wear highly visible coloured swim caps.

**MOWS 5** At all Masters Open Water events the safety of the competition shall be of paramount importance.

## World Masters Championships

### BL 10.3 Open Water Swimming

**BL 10.3.1** A Masters Open Water Swimming event may be included in FINA World Masters Championships.

**BL 10.3.2** The Organising Committee shall follow the FINA Masters Open Water Safety Regulations.

**BL 10.3.3** Swimmers shall be seeded according to age groups from the youngest to the oldest. Swimmers may be selected irrespective of gender. The slowest entered swimmers of each age group may comprise and be seeded in special heat(s). By recommendation of the FINA Masters Commission and/or nominated Safety Officer this order may be changed.

**BL 10.3.4** If the number of entries is more than 1000 the competition may be swum in two or more days.

**BL 10.3.5** Race organisers, in consultation with the referee and subject to advice from FINA Technical Open Water Swimming Committee, are to designate in advance the cut off time for each Masters race. As a rough guide, a time of 30 minutes per kilometre could apply.

## World Championship programme of events

### GR 9.6.1.7 Open Water Swimming events

Men	Women	Mixed Team Event
25 kilometres	25 kilometres	
10 kilometres	10 kilometres	
5 kilometres	5 kilometres	5 kilometres

GR 9.6.1.7 The qualifying period and system will be decided by the FINA Bureau.



## Appendices - Sample Forms

### Judges/Timekeepers record form - instructions

Notes:

1. Duplicate the form and customise to your own championships;
2. Finish Judges, Timekeepers and Turn Judges can use the same form, if you wish you can customise these to indicate the particular duty:
  - a. Finish Judges will just record the competitor's race number against the finish place;
  - b. Timekeepers will record the times against the finish place, adding in the competitor number if there is time;
  - c. Turn Judges will at the very least keep a tally of the number of competitors that pass their turn; if circumstances allow they should also try to note down the competitors' race numbers and take a time as well. This time can be race time if they were able to hear the start signal, alternatively it could be relative to the first competitor passing their buoy;
  - d. Chief Finish Judges will use the form to consolidate the results and hand to the Recorder, who can add the competitor's names before issuing as a final results sheet. Once printed the official copy of the final results should be signed by the Referee.
3. Remember that Turn Judges will need a form for every lap;
4. If there are more than 30 competitors in one event, create continuation sheets with sufficient numbers to cater for the number of your entries;
5. Timekeepers should just record times as their first priority. However, whenever possible they should also note down competitors' race numbers if they have the chance, to enable easier correlation between the Finish Judges' sheets and Timekeepers' sheets;
6. During any lull in the swimmers approaching the finish, Judges and Timekeepers should check with each other that they each have recorded the same number of finishers, if not mark the results sheet at that point to indicate that the problem had been spotted. This gives a marker for the Chief Finish Judge to work from when trying to resolve problems afterwards.

**Note: All these sample forms are designed to be copied and tailored to your event. Copies of the warning and incident reports can be downloaded from <https://www.britishswimming.org/browse-sport/swimming/officials/open-water-officials/>**

Open Water *Event title*

**Judges/Timekeepers record form**

<b>Finish</b>	<b>Competitor No.</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Name</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			

# Turn Judge

5km Event - 2 laps

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	<del>25</del>	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	<del>35</del>	36				

Lap 1


Lap 2


Notes:

If possible print these forms for each event with the numbers of the swimmers allocated in the first table;

The form should have the same number of empty tables as the number of laps in the race;

Mark in the number of each swimmer as they pass your position for each lap;

If you miss a number leave a blank in the box;

When there is a lull at your Turn point use the time to cross check with the first table that you have seen all the swimmers;

If asked by the Referee, report when all swimmers have completed each lap;

In the example, there were 36 entries for this three-lap race. Swimmers numbers 25 and 35 have withdrawn before the start, their numbers have been crossed out;

Finish Judges should also use this form if they are close enough to the Turn at the end of each lap;

The Referee can also use this form to keep track of swimmers as they complete each lap.

# Warning / Disqualification Report



## OPEN WATER WARNING / DISQUALIFICATION REPORT

Event	Date	Competitor number
-------	------	-------------------

**WARNING REPORT (YELLOW FLAG/CARD)** (PLEASE COMPLETE CLEARLY AND LEGIBLY)


TIME OF REPORT:	OFFICIAL'S LOCATION:	LAP No.:	DISTANCE SWUM:
-----------------	----------------------	----------	----------------

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULE NUMBER:

**DISQUALIFICATION REPORT (RED FLAG/CARD)** (PLEASE COMPLETE CLEARLY AND LEGIBLY)


TIME OF REPORT:	OFFICIAL'S LOCATION:	LAP No.:	DISTANCE SWUM:
-----------------	----------------------	----------	----------------

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULE NUMBER:

PRINTED NAME OF OFFICIAL:

SIGNATURE:

OFFICIAL'S DUTY:     TURN JUDGE     RACE JUDGE     FINISH JUDGE     STARTER     CLERK OF COURSE     REFEREE

PRINTED NAME OF REFEREE:

SIGNATURE:

INFRINGEMENTS THAT CARRY A WARNING FOR FIRST OCCURRENCE	
START	
OWS 3.49	Swimmer not present in the assembly area at the required time prior to the start
OWS 4.1.1	Swimmer did not start from assigned position, when starting from a fixed platform
OWS 4.6.1	On command, swimmer did not take up starting line position immediately, or with at least one foot at the front of the fixed platform (when used)
OWS 4.8	Unfair advantage gained at the start
OWS 4.9	Swimmer's escort craft interfered with another competitor at the start
RACE	
OWS 3.30	Swimmer failed to maintain clearance from another swimmer when so instructed
OWS 6.2	Swimmer failed to cease pacing or slip-streaming with escort craft when instructed to move clear
OWS 6.4	Escort craft failed to move clear when warned they are pacing or slip-streaming a swimmer
OWS 6.8.1	Escort craft not displaying their swimmer's competitor number
OWS 6.12	Pacing of a swimmer by another person entering the water
OWS 6.13	Use of a whistle by the swimmer's representative
OWS 6.15	Object thrown from feeding platform to swimmer. Sustenance not passed directly by pole or hand
OWS 6.16	Feeding pole exceeds 5 metres in length. Object, rope or wire, hanging off feeding pole (other than permitted identity flag)
INFRINGEMENTS RESULTING IN IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION	
RACE	
OWS 3.31	Swimmer failed to execute the alterations in course as indicated in the competition information documents
OWS 6.3.2	'Unsporting' action by a swimmer, swimmer's escort craft or swimmers approved representative
OWS 6.4	Escort craft deliberately obstructing or placing themselves directly in front of another swimmer
OWS 6.6	Walking or jumping off the bottom during a race
OWS 6.7	Swimmer receiving support from a fixed or floating object (other than the water bottom) Swimmer intentionally touched escort craft or crew therein
BL 9.3.7.5	Team relay changeover between swimmers not visible above the water, following swimmer not in the water holding starting position prior to changeover, touch not made between elbow and hand
FINISH	
BL 9.3.7.4	Swimmer failed to enter the finish funnel at the correct point. Swimmer failed to remain within the funnel throughout their approach to the finish
OWS 7.2.2	Swimmer finished race without a transponder (where issued)
OWS 7.2.3	Swimmer failed to touch the vertical wall at the finish (where used)
OTHER INFRINGEMENTS	
SWIMMER AND EQUIPMENT	
BL 8.2	More than one swimsuit in one or two pieces worn Swimsuit worn not compliant with FINA By-Laws and the FRSA
BL 8.4	Swimsuit covers the neck, extends past the shoulder, or extends to below the ankle
BL 8.5	Wetsuit fails to completely cover torso, back, shoulders, and knees (When criteria requires use) Wetsuit extends beyond the neck, wrists or ankles.
OWS 3.48	Swimmer failed to trim fingernails and/or toenails when so instructed Swimmer failed to remove jewellery, including watches when so instructed
OWS 6.10	Swimmer wearing a device which may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy. More than two (2) caps being worn
OWS 6.11	Swimmer using excessive greases or other such substances

**Swimmer shall be given an opportunity to take corrective action, change swimwear, remove jewellery and watches, and trim nails prior to the start. Failure to comply may result in swimmer being given a Warning, a Disqualification, or not being permitted to swim.**



# Open Water Swimming Incident Reporting Form

<b>Section 1: Event Details</b> Name of Event: Location: Date: Licence Number:	
<b>Section 2: Details of Injured/Affected Person</b> Name: Address:  Post Code: Telephone Number: E-mail Address: Club: Membership Number:	<i>Details of Parent/Guardian if Injured/Affected Person is Under the Age of 18</i> Name of Parent/Guardian:  Address:  Post Code: Telephone Number: E-mail Address:
<b>Section 3: Incident Details</b> Time of Incident: Description of Incident:	
<b>Section 4: Actions Taken</b>	
<b>Section 5: Witness Details</b> Name: Address: Post Code: Telephone Number: E-mail Address: Club: Membership Number:	Name: Address: Post Code: Telephone Number: E-mail Address: Club: Membership Number:
Report Completed by:	Date:

## Guidance

This form should be completed in respect of any accident/incident that is reported to any official/Safety Officer at an open water swimming event falling within the following criteria;

- Cuts bruises or accidents including cuts or bruised that require treatment by safety crews, onshore first aid personnel, doctors.
- Case of hypothermia that requires medical treatment beyond adding extra clothes/blankets or taking a warm shower.
- Illness that requires medical intervention by first aid personnel, or doctors.
- Competitors reporting any injury or illnesses that the Safety Officer deems makes them unfit to take part in the event. The event Chief Referee should be informed of this.

Reports are not required for the following:

- Swimmers who withdraw or are removed from event due to exhaustion or cold, but who do not need further medical attention.
- Swimmers or other persons attending the event who are injured or become ill as a result of incidents that occurred prior to them arriving at the venue.

Near Miss Report:

- Situations where, under slightly different circumstances, an incident could have resulted in harm to someone attending the event, should be recorded in the Safety Officer's section of the licenced event report form.

## Distribution of Report:

Copies of this report should be issued to;

The person who received medical attention or their parent/guardian

The SE Region / SW / SS Open Water Organiser (as appropriate)

The organiser of the event

The event Safety Officer