



**Guidelines for
MEET DIRECTORS and CLUBS**

**Conducting a Swimming Meet
Sanctioned by
Masters Swimming Australia**

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INTRODUCTION

An MSA sanctioned swim meet may be between two or more clubs or open to all clubs in your branch/Australia and even to registered masters from overseas.

How many swimmers do you think you will attract to your meet? 20, 200, 2000? How many events do you intend to hold? How many lanes are available for the competition in the venue you will use?

These factors, the number of swimmers, the number of events, and the lane space available will determine how long the meet will take to run. It may be two hours, a full day or even a week.

The size and duration of the meet will determine how you will need to organise the meet. Small two club meets can be organised by one or two people, while bigger events will need a committee to share the workload. Typical divisions of responsibilities can be seen in the **National Championships Meet Guide** which is available on the MSA website at Events. This guide is recommended reading if you are planning to hold a large meet. It covers issues like Programming, Finance, Marketing, Social events, Awards, Safety, and Technical. This document - **Guidelines for Meet Directors** deals mainly with the technical issues involved in organising a swim meet.

The one person essential in organising a meet is the Meet Director, who will be responsible for the supervision of all organisational aspects of preparations for the meet, its conduct and follow-up.

This manual is designed to make your job as Meet Director a whole lot easier by guiding you through the steps that are needed to ensure you hire a suitable swim facility, then to check that all equipment and personnel are arranged for the day(s) of the swim meet.

ABBREVIATIONS/DEFINITIONS

AOE Automatic officiating equipment. The timing system is started when the Starter presses the starting signal and is stopped when the swimmer first touches the yellow touch pad at the end of their race.

Deck or pool deck is the area immediately surrounding the pool that is “off limits” to spectators during major competitions. It is used by competitors and the following officials: referees, judges of stroke, inspectors of turns, starters, chief timekeepers, timekeepers and runners. The marshalling and recording areas are usually off the deck.

Event A subset of a meet in which all swimmers are doing the same distance and style, eg. 50m Freestyle. Where there are more competitors than there are lanes, the event is divided into separate races called Heats.

MDs Swimmer with a Medical Disability certificate (see **MSA Swimming Rules SW 15M**).

Meet A swimming competition that may be comprised of individual and/or relay events.

MSA Masters Swimming Australia, the parent body of masters swimming in Australia.

SAT Semi-automatic timing. The timing system is started when the Starter presses the starting signal and is stopped manually by the timekeepers in each lane depress a button when the swimmers touch the wall at the end of the race.

ORGANISING AN MSA SANCTIONED SWIM MEET

If you or your club are thinking of organising a swimming meet and want to apply for an MSA sanction you are advised to read the MSA General Rules and the MSA Swimming Rules (see Masters Swimming Australia website under "Rules")

You will need to check the following items to ensure the pool you wish to use and your other ideas are feasible before you apply for a sanction from your MSA branch.

1. Pool Grounds and Buildings

1.1 Safety/Medical:

There must be clear access for ambulance and a clearly marked First Aid Room/area. See the **National Safety Policy** for full details at MSA website under Information/Policies. Also read the **National Risk Management Policy** at the same site.

1.2 Areas/room available for:

- a. **Displays** – association and sponsors' promotional material, trophies and clubs' banners.
- b. **Sale of raffle tickets** and display of prizes
- c. **Presentations** - Photos/Massage/Engraving
- d. **Announcer** - suitable space to view start and finish of races plus efficient PA system
- e. **Recording** - Room available. Check with the Recorder for their requirements including tables, power, protest forms, record application forms etc
- f. **Marshalling** - clearly marked area with space / seating to allow for at least six heats of swimmers to be marshalled when deck seeding. Seating should preferably be arranged as in **Appendix C Preferred Seating for Marshalling Area**.

When marshalling, there must be an easily sighted device to display the numbers of the current event and heat when heat seeded, or event and swimmer number when deck seeded.

1.3 Seating – adequate for competitors, timekeepers and spectators – additional seating may need to be hired.

1.4 Change Rooms - have adequate space, clean toilets and showers and non slip floors/matting.

2. Competition Swimming Pool:

2.1 Pool Depth – Check the depth of the pool at both ends and the height of the starting blocks above the water level. The type of start (eg, dive from side only or start in water) allowed is shown in the **National Safety Policy** - page 8 - **6. Diving into Pools**.

2.2 Walls - End walls must be parallel and form right angles to the swimming course and to the surface of the water and shall be constructed of solid material and have a non-slip surface extending from 0.3m above the water surface to 0.8m below the water surface. Beware of openings in pool end walls as swimmers may put their hands or feet into them when turning or finishing.

2.3 Rest ledges - are permitted but must be not less than 1.2m below the water surface and may be 0.1 to 0.15m wide.

2.4 Gutters - may be on all four walls of the pool, however any end wall gutters must be covered with a suitable grill or screen.

Where touch pads will be used, the gutters must allow for attachment of the pads to 0.3m above the water surface.

2.5 Exit/entry steps - and ladders must allow swimmers to enter and leave the pool easily and ladders must not intrude into the competition space. If needed, use a pool edge lane rope to keep swimmers clear of protruding ladders.

2.6 Starting Blocks - must be safe, non-slip, stable and the correct height. Blocks should be on the end wall, clearly and correctly numbered with the lane numbers and accessible for older swimmers and swimmers with a disability.

2.7 Lanes - must be marked on floor of pool in the centre of each lane. Markings must end 2.0m from each end of the pool with a distinctive cross line 1.0m long. Target lines shall be placed on the end walls or on the touch panels in the centre of each lane. They shall extend without interruption from the deck edge to the floor of the pool. A cross line 0.5m long shall be placed 0.3m below the water surface.

2.8 Booms – where fitted (eg. 25m course in a 50m pool) must be stable and top and end surface must be non-slip.

2.9 Deck Space - there must be enough room on each side of the pool and at the pool ends to allow unimpeded access for the referee, judges of stroke and inspectors of turns.

- There must also be enough space at the finishing end for seating for two to three timekeepers per lane and for the timekeepers to see the starting device and the starter clearly.
- There should be room at the starting end for at least one heat of swimmers and provision must be made for storing their tracksuits, footwear etc.

2.10 Protective Cover from Sun and Rain - if applicable and possible there should be protection from sun and rain for officials. Refer to the **National Safety Policy** on the MSA website at Information/Policies.

2.11 Pool Lighting - where an indoor facility is being used, light intensity over the starting platforms and turning ends shall not be less than 600 lux.

2.12 Pool Survey Certificate

Ensure a copy has been obtained, is satisfactory and has been filed with MSA and your Branch (State) Office. **Records cannot be broken in pools that do not have a lodged pool survey.**

2.13 Other Pool Requirements - includes water temperature (must be 25 to 28 degrees Celsius) & clarity; air temperature and ventilation of chemical odours.

2.14 Warm-up facilities - as per the **National Safety Policy**, with designated lane signs and access before, during and immediately after the meet. See instructions sent with sanctioning material.

Appendix A. Risk Assessment Sheet may be used to highlight potential problems when choosing a venue and immediately before the Meet.

3. Pool Equipment

3.1 Lane Ropes - shall extend the full length of the course, be firmly stretched and be secured at each end wall to anchor brackets recessed into the end walls.

Each lane rope will consist of floats placed end to end having a minimum diameter of 0.05m to a maximum of 0.15m and no more than one lane rope between each lane.

The colour of the floats extending for a distance of 5.0m from each end of the pool shall be distinct from the rest of the floats.

There must be clear markings at the 15m mark at both ends of the pool or on the poolside to allow officials to ensure swimmers comply with the rules of starting and turning.

3.2 False Start Rope - in working order, 15m from the pool starting end & not less than 1.2m above the pool surface so it does not interfere with swimmers.

3.3 Backstroke Flags - at both ends of the pool and between 1.8m and 2.5m above the surface of the water.

3.4 Electronic scoreboard and touch-pads - buttons etc are functioning correctly (if to be used)

3.5 Starting System

Determine what timing system(s) will be available and used.

They may be AOE, SAT (2 or 3 buttons per lane), or hand held digital stop watches (ie. 2 or 3 per lane).

Determine who you will use to do the timing -

- club members, family or friends;
- a local service group eg. Scouts or Rotary (you would need to give a donation);
- a sports training institution (part of their curriculum); or
- competing clubs (allocate lanes to each club).

Ensure that training is provided before the meet (see MSA website at Technical/Technical Training Courses/Timekeeper/Timekeeper Candidate notes. Your branch can arrange for a Presenter to assist.

The starting system must be fully operational and be audible and visible to the timekeepers. Check visibility from other end of pool, especially in outdoor pools where events will start at one end and finish at the other and the sun may become a problem in the early morning or late afternoon. A back-up system must be available, even if it is a whistle.

3.6 Call Board - When heat or deck seeded, there must be an easily sighted device to display the numbers of the event and heats, or events and swimmers, required for marshalling. This should be supported by audible announcements.

4. Events

4.1 General Rules – Organisers need to be familiar with the General Rules regarding the Organisation of Events and Swim Meet Events and any further requirements of the sanctioning body/Branch.

4.2 Two swimmers to a lane – If two swimmers are required to swim in the same lane due to the anticipated number of entrants, organisers must follow GR 6.12, GR 6.16, and SW 3.6M (see MSA website at Rules/General Rules and Swimming Rules).

5. Other equipment

5.1 Programs – you will need to have programs printed with a minimum of one copy for each official, one for the information desk, one for each competing club, one per lane for the timekeepers and one for the announcer.

5.2 Timekeepers' equipment – you will need a clipboard, ballpoint pens and, if not using AOE and SAT; two to three digital stopwatches per lane plus three backup watches in reserve. They will also need split sheets to record lap times in longer events (400m plus).

5.3 400m and longer events – if you are holding longer events you will need lap counters for each lane and bells or whistles to cover every second lane.

5.4 One lap events – For 25m events in 25m pools and 50m events in 50m pools you will need heat/lane cards or disks to give to the swimmers. These cards/disks may also be used when AOE/SAT timing is being used.

6. Volunteers

You will need to organise volunteers for each of the following functions.

Points 2 to 9 should be delegated to other club members.

6.1 Warm-up supervisors –to supervise the warm-up sessions pre-competition and one per dedicated warm-up lane during the sessions.

6.2 Information/Promotion/Raffle Table

6.3 Relay entry table (may be Information Table)

6.4 Awards Table (if applicable)

6.5 Merchandise

6.6 Refreshments – to supply water and refreshments to officials
- to set up and service urns for hot and cold drinks for competitors during the competition.

6.7 Runners - to take Infringement Cards from officials to the Event Referee and then to the Recorder.
- to take time slips / sheets from timekeepers to the Recorder.
- to return heat / lane cards to the Marshals.

6.8 Call Board Operator(s) – to change event and heat or swimmer numbers being called (at the direction of the Marshals).

6.9 Supper/BBQ/Sausage sizzle – to organise and provide any supper arrangements that have been made/advertised.

7. Applying for a Sanction.

Once you are satisfied that all of the above requirements can be met, you are ready to select and book a date(s) and to contact your Branch Office for a sanction.

They will advise you on how to advertise the meet.

THE ATTACHED APPENDICES WILL BE USEFUL IN SETTING UP AND RUNNING THE SWIM MEET.

MEET DIRECTOR DUTIES

Refer to:

Swimming Rules SW 1(all); and SW 3

If an event is to be swum with two swimmers in the same lane see SW 3.6M

General Rules (GR 6 note GR 6.1.1, GR 6.12, GR 6.13, GR 6.14, GR 6.15, and GR 6.16; GR 7; GR 8 especially GR 8.3. and GR 8.4 and GR 9.

National Championships and other very big meets, the **National Championships Meet Guide**.

General

- Supervise the organisation and conduct of the meet.
- Uphold the provisions of the **National Safety Policy**.

Before the Meet

- Ensure suitably qualified personnel are selected for the various roles under the control of the Meet Director.
- Ensure the number of personnel for these roles is sufficient, especially during the meet when allowance for rest and refreshment breaks is required;
- Ensure adequate facilities are provided for officials and competitors.
- Attend all meetings associated with the conduct of the meet;
- Assist in the set-up of the venue immediately prior to the meet to ensure familiarity with personnel and any emergent issues.
- Liaise with the venue management prior to the first day of the meet to ensure all necessary equipment is available.
- Do a pre-meet check with the Meet Referee (**see Appendix B Pre-Meet Check List for Meet Directors and Meet Referees**).

During the Meet

- Overall management of the swimming section of the meet (ie, ensure the meet runs smoothly);
- Ensure compliance with Association **Rules** and the **National Safety Policy**.
- Liaise with the Meet Referee in managing accredited officials; ie. Referees (including Judges of Stroke and Inspectors of Turns), Starters, Check Starters, Clerks of Course, Marshals and Chief Timekeeper.
- Manage all swim meet activities and non-accredited personnel including Communications Officers, Recorders, Information Officers and Announcers.
- Liaise with venue management to ensure the smooth conduct of the meet.
- Channel complaints/queries to the relevant section or person (Information Desk should be the first contact point available to competitors).
- Be the initial contact person and liaison person for all protests associated with referee decisions. Such protests shall be on the official Protest Form and shall be handled in accordance with the official Protest Procedures. The Form and Procedures can be found on the MSA web site under **Technical/Technical Courses** as part of the Referee material.
- Where other protests are received and they cannot be easily resolved, convene a meeting of the Protest Review Committee. The outcome from that meeting is to be relayed to the competitor by the Meet Director.

- Where relay swims are included in the meet and entries close on the day of the meet, the Meet Director is to ensure adequate time is given both for submission of entries by the competitors and recording of entries by the Chief Recorder.
- Where possible identify problems on the pool deck before they become a real issue (eg, safety hazards, incorrect use of warm up pool).
- Maintain close liaison with all official personnel.
- Approve any public announcements that may affect the meet.
- Be available at all times (or appoint a qualified person while not on duty).

After the Meet

- Ensure the area and equipment used is left in a clean and tidy condition.
- Ensure all post meet processing is completed in a timely manner.
- Ensure a written report is submitted to the Chairman of the Organising Committee or the sanctioning body on the activities of the Meet Director. List any suggestions for changes to be made to future meets.
- Debrief all key officials and volunteers listed above to review any problems encountered during the meet.
- Attend any de-brief sessions as requested by the Chairman of the Organising Committee.

MEET REFEREE DUTIES

General

The Meet Referee shall have full control and authority over all technical officials, shall approve their assignments and instruct them regarding all special features or regulations relating to the competition. He/she shall enforce all rules and decisions of the Association and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the event or competition, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by the rules (see SW 2.1M).

Before the Meet

- In conjunction with the Meet Director, ensure there is a suitable number of Referees (incorporating Judges of Stroke and Inspectors of Turns), Starters, Check Starters, Clerks of Course, Marshals and Chief Timekeepers.
- Attend all meetings associated with the conduct of the meet as requested by the Meet Director.
- Liaise with the Meet Director to ensure suitable access is available to safely and efficiently officiate the meet.
- Liaise with the Meet Director prior to the start of the meet to ensure all necessary equipment is available, in position and working (**Appendix B - Pre-Meet Checklist for Meet Directors and Meet Referees**).

During the Meet

- Ensure all accredited officials are at their posts and performing their duties competently throughout the meet.
- Adjudicate on any protests referred by the Meet Director according to the official Protest Procedures.

After the Meet

- Conduct a debrief session of all key accredited officials to determine if there were:
 - any problems/concerns with the conduct of the competition or competitors; or
 - any incidents or accidents that need to be recorded.
- Submit a written report to the swim meet host body, the Meet Director and the Sanctioning Body on problems / concerns with the conduct of the competition; competitor problems including a printout of the **Disqualification Report** available from the Recorder; any incidents or accidents; and lessons to be learnt using the **Meet Referee Report Form**.
- Attend any de-brief sessions as requested by the Meet Director or the Convenor of the Technical Sub Committee.

EVENT REFEREE(S) (see SW 2.1M)

Before the Meet

- Liaise with the Meet Referee re the running of the meet.

During the Meet

- Ensure all deck officials are in place and ready.
- Ensure all competitors comply with current swim rules.
- Where a swimmer is disqualified, that information must be recorded on an **Infraction Report Card**. The Event Referee shall also ensure, if possible, that any swimmer who is disqualified is notified by a deck official as soon as is practicable (this is especially important for foreign competitors).

After the Meet

Provide a report (written if necessary) to the Meet Director on any relevant aspects of the operation of the meet.

We urge that this form is to be completed by the Meet Director or Convenor of any sanctioned event and returned to your Branch Office						CLUB:									
Activity or Event:			Date of Event:												
Safety Analysis: ✓ Tick the box ONLY if the risk recorded is applicable to your venue. Include and identify risks not recorded on this sheet i.e. 'Other'				Tick the appropriate level of Risk High /Medium / Low			Tick whether the risk is ACCEPTABLE or UNACCEPTABLE		LOCATION:						
Potential Hazard/Risk Factor :				H		M		L		ACCEPTABLE		UNACCEPTABLE		Possible Implications:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pool Depth unsuitable for height of diving blocks <input type="checkbox"/> • Wet slippery areas around pool deck or in toilet/shower area. <input type="checkbox"/> • Broken tiles or chipped lane ropes <input type="checkbox"/> • Diving into warm up lane/s <input type="checkbox"/> • Exposed tent pegs or trailing electrical cords <input type="checkbox"/> • Inadequate supervision during conduct of Open Water Swims. <input type="checkbox"/> • Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> • Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> 				<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injuries to back or neck • Slips or falls • Cuts or grazes • Collision between swimmers • Injuries as a result of tripping • Swimmer drowning after becoming distressed • • 	
UNACCEPTABLE RISK - Action Taken: (Please tick the appropriate box below (<i>Ongoing Risk / Risk Resolved</i>), once you've explained what action has been taken.															
Ongoing Risk: <input type="checkbox"/>												Risk Resolved: <input type="checkbox"/>			
RISK TREATMENT PLAN															
Action/Control						Responsibility of:						Addressed:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified First Aid person in attendance • Safety mats for slippery areas • Supervision of warm up lane/s • Provision for prompt mopping up of a blood spill if it occurs • Cover all extrusions on ground or elsewhere • Provision of sun protection (shade) and sunscreen to officials and volunteers. • Report to Pool Management any damage to facility that could cause injury. • • 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • • • 						Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>			
This assessment was undertaken to the best of my ability and based on available information on behalf of _____ Club.															
Relevant risks have been referred to Pool Management where appropriate.												Date:			

Appendix B Pre-Meet Check List for Meet Directors and Meet Referees

- Pools should meet the specifications listed in Appendix A and the MSA General Rules.
- The items listed below are to be checked by the Meet Director before the day of the Meet and by the Meet Referee with the Meet Director before the meet is allowed to start.

ITEM	CHECK
MEDICAL	
Clear access for ambulance	
Clearly marked First Aid Room/area	
Medical Officer or Pool Lifeguard in attendance (from the start of the warm up until the pool is cleared after the last event of the day)	
PROGRAMS	
One copy for each lane and one copy for each of the officials listed in the program including the Announcer.	
One copy (at least) for each competing club	
RECORDING/TIMING	
Timing equipment booked. Electronic or Semi-automatic if available. If not, 2 to 3 watches per lane plus 2 spares	
Assistants if requested	
Suitable room is available	
List of current Branch; National and World records available	
List of MDs for Event Referees	
At end of meet List of Disqualifications for the Meet Referee	
PROTECTIVE COVER	
As per Sun Policy	
WARM-UP	
Designated stroke lanes available and supervised with signs to advise use of each lane	
If one lane during meet - restrict to freestyle and breaststroke. The lane must be supervised.	
POOL	
Ensure suitable access is available to safely and efficiently officiate the meet	
Check pool depth both ends to see if there are any limits on dive starts (see National Safety Policy).	
Water temperature 25C to 28C	
Lane ropes in place, firmly stretched and secured at each end wall	
15m markings at both ends of the pool are clearly marked	
Backstroke Flags 5m out from the pool end wall at both ends of the pool.	
Starting System fully operational, adequate audio level and visible to timekeepers, especially when start is at opposite end of the pool.	
PA System is clearly heard around the pool	
Call Board to display the numbers of the event and heats or swimmers required for marshalling. This should be supported by announcements	
OFFICIALS	
As per SW 1.2.1 M plus assistants	
TIMEKEEPERS	
One seat for each and sun protection if outdoors	
Clipboards, pencils for each lane and sharpeners available	
Stopwatches – 2 to 3 per lane plus at least 2 spares	
Bells or whistles for long distance events (over 400m)	
Split sheets for long distance events	
MARSHALLING	
Seating so swimmers move across rows until they are ready for Clerk of Course. Sun protection if outdoors	
Heat/Lane cards or discs for all events	
If any events are to be swum “two swimmers to a lane” ensure officials and swimmers are made aware of the marshalling and starting procedures.	
CATERING	
Water and refreshments for all officials. Lunch if meet starts before midday and ends after 2pm.	

NOTE: MEET REFEREE must bring: Infraction Report Cards; Copies of current General and Swimming Rules; Protest documents PR1 and PR2

Appendix C PREFERRED SEATING FOR MARSHALLING AREA

One of the problems of past marshalling areas was swimmers having to move from row to row as each heat left the area. Because of this many swimmers refused to sit until their heat was called by the Clerk of Course. There is now a much easier and more workable system for officials and swimmers.

The numbers below represent 8 rows of 6 chairs per row. Each row should have attached to the outside of its end chair a number representing a pool competition lane. The end chairs would be numbered from 0 to 10 in 10 lane pools and 1 to 8 in 8 lane pools (as in this example). So if there are 8 lanes you will need 8 rows of chairs. The underlined numbers represent a row of chairs.

<u>Heats</u> →	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
↑	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
a	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
n	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
e	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
s	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
↓	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>

The number of chairs in each row will be determined by the number of heats you will want to marshal for the 25m or 50m events.

If you wish to marshal 6 heats then you will have 6 chairs in each row.

When you marshal the first 6 heats all the swimmers in lane 1 will be in the first row, those in lane 2 in the second row etc up to all those in the lane 8 being in the 8th row.

This means that when the Clerk of Course wants to take heat 1 all the swimmers in the seats under Heat 1 in the above diagram, ie. the left end swimmer from each row. The remaining swimmers then all move one seat to their left and heat 7 then takes the right hand end seats.

Depending on the orientation of the marshalling area to the pool the Clerk of Course may take either the swimmer in lane 1 or the swimmer in lane 8 first.

Likewise the heats may number from left to right or right to left. This is for the Chief Marshal to decide.