

Swimming New Zealand

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Date	17 – 18 May, 2014
Location	Swimming New Zealand Headquarters - Auckland
Activity	Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Attendance	Jo Davidson (Chair), Lyn Sutherland, Gavin Ion, Lesley Huckins, Dianne Farmer, Matt Meehan, Ross Bragg, Kent Stead (SNZ Staff) & Daniel Pearce (SNZ Staff)

Item 1: Minutes from previous meeting

Confirmation that the minutes from the previous meeting are correct: Moved Lesley Huckins & 2nd Matt Meehan

Item 2: Matters arising from the previous meeting

- Gavin Ion enquired Item 3, JOS - clarification on whether or not the JOS can be sitting down or standing up.

Jo Davidson agreed that the wording needed to be clarified to avoid confusion. Suggest removal of wording "...or sitting down..."
- Dianne Farmer enquired regarding the progress on the proposed Officials Identification Card for Technical Officials.

Lesley Huckins explained that there was no significant progress as yet. Andy Adair has also offered some assistance.
- Dianne Farmer requested information regarding the placement of the *Introduction to Officiating* document on SNZ website?

Kent Stead explained that the placement of the document has been delayed to align with the launch of the new SNZ Website. There will be a dedicated officiating resource page.
- Dianne Farmer requested an update on the *Announcers Pathway/Resources* that was previously discussed.

Jo Davidson and Ross Bragg are in process of gathering feedback from existing experienced announcers in an effort to update the documents that will form part of the resources page on the new SNZ website.
- Jo Davidson raised the discussion that was held at the previous meeting regarding the fees associated with protests and withdrawals/penalties.

Lesley advised that currently the FINA amount is 130 Swiss Francs or the equivalent in the host country.

The Committee agreed to increase the protest fee for all national meets in New Zealand to \$100.

This recommendation will be submitted to the SNZ Board for consideration.

- The committee discussed the merit in requiring all swimmers to marshal for relay events at national meets. It was agreed that some venues (particularly

Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre) struggle to cope with the numbers when marshalling for 4 heats across 2 events.

Lesley advised that the marshalling process ensures that the correct swimmers are in the correct age group and lanes.

Kent and Gavin suggested that with upcoming changes to OH&S requirements, relays at WRAC and other venues may be forced to swim as 4 x 100m as a minimum due to pool depth. Capacity at certain venues may also be further limited.

- The Committee requested an update regarding updating the complete list of visitors records.
Lesley advised that Norma Williams was probably the person who would have the information required. The committee is unsure as to how far back the records are kept.
The NZ Book of Records will need to be transferred on to the new website.

- Lesley enquired about the progress with the World Masters Games bid.

Kent explained that a decision has been made however; the release of information has been embargoed until all sports are signed off and an official announcement function will be held.

He went on to explain that part of the submission was based on an ongoing development of technical officials within the Auckland Region. SNZ and Auckland Swimming will need to meet (if successful) to ensure that this target is reached.

- Jo Davidson sought feedback regarding the monitoring of pool deck passes at SNZ events.
Lesley and Kent both advised that pool staff and host region personnel are appointed to the monitor passes at the entry times before each session. Some regions/centres are better than others in their approach however; the control on pool deck at all venues is difficult to control.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the wording in the event flyer and event information documents needs to be more assertive and explain that people without passes will be required to move to the designated spectator areas.

Item 3: Meet Directors Reports

Junior Championships | Feb 14 – 16 | Wellington

Meet Director – Matt Meehan

- Overall a great event with good numbers of attendance.
- One protest during the event.
- Support from SNZ staff and Swimming Wellington was great.
- The only major issue was surrounding the spectators and reaching capacity. Suggestions around pre-selling of tickets and/or more temporary seating.

National Age Group Championships | April 29 – 3 May | Wellington

Meet Director – Lesley Huckins

- A very well received event with minimal issues.
- Some Disqualification Forms were incorrectly filed by some technical officials.

- The roster was completed late due to some lists arriving later than usual.
- Rotation of lanes was well received by IOT's – good idea for long sessions/meets.
- 53 x DQ's throughout the meet. This number seems high and it seems strange that swimmers at a National Meet are being disqualified for some basic stroke mistakes.

Open Championships | April 8 – 11 | Auckland
Meet Director - Ross Bragg

- Successful meet with a very competitive atmosphere.
- New Auckland Swimming team worked well with the appointed technical officials.
- Ross expressed his disappointment with the Opening Ceremony, not only at this event but at all SNZ National Events.
Jo advised that this item has been marked for discussion in General Business.
- The TV trolley that was being used as part of the television coverage was an issue for the JOS officials throughout the whole event.
This was noted and marked for discussion during General Business.
- Rotation of officials through the AOD room worked well.

Division II Competition | March 12 – 15 | Hamilton
Meet Director – Gavin Ion

- Gavin explained that he faced some interesting challenges especially as this was his first SNZ meet as Meet Director
- 3 protests filed during the meet with one going to JOA.
- Self-marshalling went really well regardless of the anxiety from coaches beforehand. There needs to be a little more definition around the actual marshalling area at Hamilton.
- There was some confusion regarding para-swimmers swimming at the meet and the rules surrounding their abilities. More clarification is needed prior to the event via the meet information and meet flyer.
- Swimming Waikato was excellent with their assistance throughout.

Open Water Championships | January 11 – 12 | Taupo
Meet Director – John West

- Successful event with records numbers in both the open water champs and the public participation events.
- Need to improve communication with Meet Director and event staff as to who is responsible for what aspects of the event delivery.
Some confusion as to who the Water safety Coordinator was during the event.
- Suggestion to improve the capabilities of the water safety crew with more boats and better resources i.e. mobile first aid kits in each boat etc. Suggestion to use jet ski's for rapid response rescue and increased mobility.
- Some small issues around radio coverage – some blank spots throughout the course. Suggested briefing for all officials re: communications throughout the event.
- Scheduling of events and presentations needs to be revisited to eliminate talking over of briefings for swimmers.
- Suggestion to combine start of the 10km races.
- Suggestion for a more defined entry chute on sea plane side of finish gantry. This will double as a briefing area for the swimmers as well as eliminating the issue of swimmers entering the water without being accounted for.
- Life jackets and the requirements for feeders/officials created some confusion.

Decision for SNZ to source 15-20 jackets to hold as back-up. Need to reinforce the compulsory wearing of lifejackets for feeders/officials while in the water or transporting between boats during the event.

- Roles and responsibilities document to be drafted up by both Paul Matson and John West.
- Recommend that a Friday afternoon briefing is introduced for Chief Referees, SNZ Event Staff and Safety Personnel.

Item 4: Assessments

- Jo thanked each of the appointed assessors for their honest and informative assistance with the assessments at each of the meets.
- There was much discussion about each of the assessments and the committee will follow up with each individual as required.
- There was some discussion about reviewing the assessment document so that it can be adapted for the different accreditation levels of officials.

Jo and Matt Meehan will look at the current document and amend accordingly.

Item 5: Appointments for remaining 2014 events & FINA Lists

2014 Short Course Championships Dianne Farmer

2014 Secondary Schools Championships Matt Meehan

Matt suggested that he will look to appoint 4 starters to enable rotation. The committee agreed that the CRS needs to be an experienced official for Short Course as it carries a heavy work load.

FINA Open Water List #11 Gavin Ion, Paul Matson, Ross Gillespie, Marion Williams
**Gavin and Matt were not present during these selection discussions*

FINA List #18 Starters: Graham Seagull, Alan Hale
**Gavin and Matt were not present during these selection discussions*

Referees: Dianne Farmer, Gavin Ion, Christine Cassin
**Gavin, Dianne & Jo were not present during these selection discussions.*

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- The committee had some discussion regarding targeting some events other than SNZ meets that could be targeted as learning/development opportunities for SNZ officials.
 - Swimming Australia has been contacted re: 2014 Pan Pacs with no response. Kent and Daniel to follow up with appropriate staff in Australia.
 - 2014 Commonwealth Games supposedly has limited allowance for International Officials.
 - The committee offered their congratulations to Lyn Sutherland for her appointment to the 2014 World Short Course Championships in Doha.
 - Kent explained that there is some funding available via the PM Scholarship programme. These funds would need to be allocated for a Technical Official to attend an International Meet. The committee suggested that World Cup and Asian Cup events are examined as possibilities.
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Item 6: Regional Updates

Each member covered off their regions with updates as to current positions.

Item 7: General Business

- Blue Bridge Vouchers

The committee asked for an update on the outstanding Blue Bridge Vouchers that have been won by officials at each of the SNZ meets this season.

Kent explained that they will be delivered in due course. SNZ is currently in the process of resigning the agreement with Blue Bridge.

- Para swimmers at Div II

There was some confusion at the meet regarding a para swimmer's inclusion in able bodied events.

After some discussion it was agreed that there needs to be more clarity around the meet flyer and the SNZ regulations to avoid the same instance occurring again.

- Pacemaking

Jo Davidson raised the ongoing issue to the committee for discussion.

Ross Bragg agreed that there are some clubs that are blatantly ignoring the rules regarding pacemaking. This was obvious at both the Div II and Open Championships. Ross also highlighted the extreme methods that some European countries take to outlaw the practise.

The committee agreed to seek feedback from other Technical officials and Coaches in relation to their observations at meets. While the topic is difficult to police at SNZ meets, an educational reminder may assist.

- Swimwear

There have been many instances where swimmers are using swimwear with the incorrect codes on the garments.

Some research into the issue suggests that some suppliers may be purchasing products from unauthorised suppliers and selling to swimmers that are unaware that they are buying a non-compliant suit.

The committee agreed that there needs to be some further education/resource available for swimmers/clubs. SNZ will take the lead on educating swimmers on checking for approved swimwear.

- Expiry Period for Officials Qualifications

Ross questioned the validity period of an officials' accreditation. How long does the accreditation last before a renewal is required?

Jo and Lesley explained that there is currently no expiration date. They also highlighted that there may be some regions that will not have records that would be up to date beyond 4 years.

Ross raised the situation with returning officials and what the requirements are for re-accreditation. For some regions, a returning official can be absent for 2 years before requirement a full re-accreditation.

The committee agreed that a period of 4 years is sufficient for an accreditation before expiry. In relation to returning officials, the committee agreed to revisit this scenario after seeking feedback.

- Regulations & By-Laws

Kent and Lesley are in the process of updating the required documents.

Jo expressed her concern that a lot of the changes to regulations/by-laws are not necessarily getting out to the membership, which can create some confusion when they arrive at a new event unaware of changes.

SNZ to revisit the process in which regulation/by-law changes are disseminated.

- Announcers Pathway and Resources

Ross briefly revisited the previous days discussions regarding improving the Announcers Pathway and increasing the number of resources available.

He recognised the need for SNZ to develop some quality announcers as SNZ currently have a limited number of announcers. SNZ need to utilise the services and experience of the existing good quality announcers to help develop a resource manual or similar for new announcers.

The other difficulty is trying to get the right balance of announcing versus actual commentary of races. It is a difficult thing to do and very effective when done correctly.

- Regional Flyers

Dianne Farmer has noticed that it can be quite difficult for some clubs/regions to distribute their meet information. Often they are in different formats and can be confusing to read, especially for visiting swimmers.

The committee recommended that SNZ and regions work to develop a basic *meet information template* to try and get some consistency across the board.

There was also some discussion regarding the approval of regional meet flyers if times from that meet are going to be used as qualifying times. The committee were encouraged to make sure that they are reviewing each of the major meet flyers in their respective regions.

- Functions for Officials at SNZ Meets

SNZ and the TAC have received some negative feedback from officials about the quality and timing of the official's functions.

The committee discussed the functions briefly and agreed that it is not a big issue. Other sports do not offer similar functions. They also agreed that the timing of the functions will be dependent on the meet i.e. the lunch at NAGs worked well due to the length of the sessions.

- Control Room Personnel

Lesley Huckins discussed her observations of the different control room operations at different facilities. She felt that some regions perform better than others when operating during a meet. Some seem to have too many personnel in the AOD room, especially during critical times.

The committee agreed that the Control Room can be a difficult aspect to manage especially with different personalities however; a good control room supervisor should be able to handle this situation.

The committee also discussed the allocation of roles to the Recorders during the meet. Feedback suggests that recorders are willing and able to take on more responsibilities.

- Judge of Stroke Qualification

JOS qualification discussed and Ross Bragg is to update with comments and circulate and then it will be forwarded/posted for regions to utilised.

- SNZ Forms – Protest, DQ etc.

Jo Davidson suggested that the forms used at SNZ events need to be amended or reviewed prior to each national meet as sometimes the forms are out of date with changes to regulations etc.

The committee agreed that the forms need to have an option to add an event number identification to the DQ and penalty forms for easier reference for swimmers/regions.

As discussed earlier in the meeting, the forms will need to be updated to reflect the changes associated with the protest fee.

- Officials Disqualification Card

Matt Meehan discussed and suggested some changes to the officials DQ card as some of the wording does not reflect what swimmers are being disqualified for during a race.

There was much discussion on this topic referring back to the wording in the FINA manual in an attempt to make it easier for officials to revert back to when completing a DQ form.

The outcome was to update the guide and post it on the website.

- Locations for National Meets in 2015

Kent Stead explained that dates have been confirmed for the upcoming season however; venues are still to be confirmed as discussions with facilities and host regions are yet to be signed off.

Some venues have significantly raised their venue hire costs and SNZ are negotiating arrangements for national meets.

- Opening Ceremonies at SNZ Meets

From discussion earlier in the meeting, Ross expressed his dissatisfaction with the standard/quality of the opening ceremonies at SNZ events.

Various items such as location of the speakers while they are addressing the crowd to the VIP areas were discussed as things that need dramatic improvement.

The committee discussed the relevance/need for an opening ceremony and the majority agreed that it quite often falls on deaf ears and isn't given the appreciation that it is aiming for.

The group agreed to seek feedback from teams and regions to gather their thoughts on the topic. SNZ staff will also discuss the opening ceremony and VIP areas with SNZ President, John Mace.

- Sky TV Cameras at Open Championships

Lesley Huckins discussed the ongoing issues with the Sky Sports poolside camera at the Open Championships. It is potentially a very dangerous situation with the operators of the camera and the JOS officials tripping over each other and the camera equipment, especially the cabling.

Daniel and Kent explained that during the debrief, Sky Sports highlighted this issue and both groups are working to find a solution. Manipulating the seating on the far side of the pool, may assist with this congestion while Sky Sports are researching a more mobile controlled camera.

Jo brought to the attention of the committee, a request from Donna Bouzaid for SNZ to include a 7.5km Open Water event at the next open Water Championships to double as a selection event for an upcoming Youth Championships.

SNZ will discuss the needs with Donna and attempt to find a solution in the scheduling for the 2015 event.

Date of next meeting: November 1 & 2, 2014. Swimming NZ Headquarters.