



REFEREES

TRAINING NOTES

Adopted or Amended	By Whom	Date
Total Rewrite	SNSW TSC	28 th February 2011
Draft 3	SNSW TSC	8 th January 2012
Draft 4	SNSW TSC	6 th December 2012
Amended	SNSW TSC	24 th July 2013
Amended	SNSW TSC	29 July 2016
Revision V3	SNSW TSC	21 January 2020

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1. Introduction

The following standard, based on a competency statement prepared by Swimming Australia Limited (SAL) for Australian Swimming Referees, has been adopted as the standard that Referees should reach and maintain. It is also regarded as a general guide as to the standards expected of other Technical Officials at all levels of competition.

Swimming Referees will:

- Improve the quality of officiating at all levels of competition from club meets to international meets
- Act as role models for other officials
- Satisfy the needs of swimmers, parents, coaches and spectators during competition by providing a fair administration of those competitions

These notes identify:

- The assessment criteria for Level 1 Referees
- Pathways to becoming a competent Level 1 Referee
- Planning, preparation and responsibilities of the Referee
- Protocols applicable to the Referee
- Applying the Rules
- Disqualification
- Determining the Result
- Protests and Juries of Appeal
- Records

These training notes cover swim meets in general, with a bias towards State Championships, as they are the standard that should be emulated, and the principles that should apply when officiating at local competitions. This ensures consistency and uniformity at all levels of competition across the State and equips Officials to Referee at State and National Championships.

These notes are not meant to be a substitute for a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Rules of Swimming and should be read in conjunction with those Rules.

2. Assessment

From the Swimming Australia Learner Guide and Assessment Module:

- “The key learning experience in this unit must occur in a real, practical swim meet environment. This is also where assessment against all performance criteria must take place”

2.1. Criteria

The pre-requisites before attempting Level 1 Referees assessment are accreditation for [SAL Modules LG1 to LG9](#). LG1 is available online at [Sport Australia](#).

Level 1 Referees are assessed against the assessment activities and practical competency criteria documented in [SAL Module LG14](#). The assessment criteria from this form can be found at the end of the document.

2.2. Assessment Opportunities

In order for a candidate to have a fair opportunity to demonstrate the pool deck competencies, the following are recommended:

- Should be a State approved meet
- Should be a full session - as a guideline 2-3 hours minimum at either a Club, District or Area Meet would be required
- A Club night would not be a fair or adequate opportunity to demonstrate or assess the competencies
- Similarly, most school meets would not be fair opportunities to demonstrate or assess, unless the meet is approved by the State governing body and is conducted in accordance with Rules of Swimming.

Where a candidate does not get the chance to demonstrate a particular competency during an assessment, the candidate should be given the opportunity to demonstrate the competency by simulation. For example:

- If there are no disqualifications in a session, the assessor could ask the candidate to describe the process for handling a disqualification
- Where there are no electronic times that need adjustment, this competency could be demonstrated by either describing what to do, or the assessor handing a mock-up slip to the candidate.

Re-accreditation occurs every four (4) years. The criteria for re-accreditation are set by SAL.

3. Pathways to becoming a Referee

This section identifies the resources available for candidate Referees, and opportunities to develop the competencies to becoming a Level 1 Referee.

3.1. Fundamentals

There are three fundamentals:

- Detailed knowledge of the Swimming Rules
- Understanding the Swimming Rules
- Applying the Swimming Rules

3.2. Resources

3.2.1 Websites

The following websites are referred to throughout this document:

- [Swimming NSW](#)
- [Swimming Australia](#)
- [FINA](#)
- [Sport Australia](#)
- [WPS](#)

3.2.2 Physical Resources

Training Resources available via the Swimming NSW website for aspiring Level 1 Referees are:

- [Swimming NSW Rules](#)
- [Swimming NSW Training Notes](#)
- [Swimming NSW Training Exercises](#)
- [SAL Module Unit LG 14 - Referee](#)
- [Swimming NSW - Technical Official - Official Resources](#)
- [Swimming NSW - Governing Documents/Policies](#)

3.3. Skills and Development Opportunities

Opportunities to develop competent refereeing skills include the following:

- Practice as a Referee at Club night, Club and Area meets under the instruction and/or guidance of a qualified Referee
- Download the relevant training notes and training exercises from the Swimming NSW website, as described in section [3.2](#) above
- Engage a qualified Referee as a mentor to provide guidance and on-the-job training
- It is desirable (not a pre-requisite) that candidates undergoing development towards Level 1 Referee accreditation should have most, if not all, pre-requisite SAL Accreditations 1 to 9 before commencing development towards Level 1 Referee (Note that assessment as a Level 1 Referee cannot take place until all pre-requisite SAL Accreditations 1 to 9 are held by the candidate)
- Attempt the [Training Exercises](#) downloaded from the SNSW website. The answers for these exercises will be provided as part of any formal presentation
- Engage the Area Technical Swimming Committee (ATSC) Coordinator to organise formal training
- Continue to gain on-the-job practical training at Club night, Club and Area level meets. ATSC Coordinators may consider supporting a candidate travelling to other areas conducting Level 1 Referee training, workshops and on-the-job practical training, subject to:
 - Engagement of the ATSC Coordinator to lobby the Host ATSC
 - The Host ATSC Coordinator being comfortable with the candidate's attendance

This would ensure the candidate's ATSC Coordinator is aware of the candidate's training and development

- Candidates are encouraged to continue to nominate for, and work in, other positions on pool deck, to further develop their skills in those roles. Whilst working in these roles, Referee candidates are encouraged to consider the perspective of a Referee whilst operating in that role

- When working at Club, Area and State level meets in roles other than Referee, observe a Referee at the meet:
 - On pre-meet inspections and briefings
 - Where possible and appropriate, observe the Referee working the meet. One of the best pool deck positions to observe a Referee is as a Timekeeper
 - At any meet debriefing activities
 - Where appropriate, look at Referee Reports
- When candidates believe they are ready for assessment, organise an assessment with their ATSC Coordinator. Candidates with mentors can seek their mentor's guidance for when they are ready for assessment
- After becoming a Referee, it is important to continue to practice skills at Club and Area level
- Skills can also be enhanced by developing other Technical Officials in the Referee's Club, as well as within the Area.

4. Planning, Preparation and Responsibilities

4.1. General

A competent Referee will:

- Know the [Rules of Swimming](#).
- These rules are referred to in these notes by their section number in the rules, e.g. SW2. The Rules often refer to the appropriate Federation Internationale de Natation (FINA) Rule (FINA SW) as included in the FINA Handbook
- As the Rules will evolve over time, a competent Referee should always know the latest Rules
- Apply the most current standardised officiating procedures and application of the Rules at competitions of all levels
- Have demonstrated abilities to make decisions and manage complex challenges to ensure the smooth running of a competition
- Listen to, and evaluate, all considerations for any disputed disqualification and make fair decisions based on their expert knowledge of the Swimming Rules,
- Have an awareness of legal, moral and ethical issues relevant to decisions made during competition

4.2. Pool Dimensions

The standards for FINA Olympic Pools are found on the [FINA Website](#) under FINA Facilities.

[SNSW Rule GR1](#) provides for the SNSW Board to approve a venue pool of lesser standard for the conduct of New South Wales Championships, subject to certain provisions relating to pool length and height of starting platforms.

A Referee must know the following:

- Pool length(s), long course and short course
- Minimum pool depth
- Lane width:
 - The width of any lane should not be reduced below two (2) metres by placement of additional lane ropes in the pool
- Maximum and minimum height of starting platform above water level
- Surface area of starting platforms
- Maximum and minimum height of backstroke turn indicators above water level
- Distance from end of pool to backstroke turn indicators
- Height of false start rope above water level and distance from starting end
- Lane numbering
- Backstroke grips

GR1 prescribes the height of the starting platforms for events conducted in unenclosed pools (defined as a pool which permits the ingress and egress of water). These are generally sea-salt water or river pools. The height range allows for tidal variations. At some open water pools the starting platform can be raised or lowered mechanically to suit tidal conditions.

Referees should also know the details of the [Safe Diving Depth Policy](#).

4.3. Referees' Duties and Powers

The duties and powers of the Referee are set out in [Rule SW2](#). To complete the training exercises the candidate MUST know this rule.

A competent Referee must understand the implications of each sub-section.

Referees' training sessions should focus on these implications through discussion and practical examples in order for candidates to gain a comprehensive understanding of their role and responsibilities.

The following amplification of [Rule SW2.1](#) has been provided for both the candidate's and the trainer's assistance:

The full control and authority over all Officials' sub-section describes succinctly the area of authority the Referee has in relation to the Technical Officials appointed to that particular meet, from Judges of Strokes to Runners.

- No other person, irrespective of appointment, has the authority or right to direct any official in any capacity. Any contact with Technical Officials must be through the Referee, and the Referee must be made aware of any attempt at interference or direction of appointed officials (see also relevant [Rule in SW10](#) re access to pool areas designated for competition).

Any instructions to Technical Officials, whether formally as a group, or individually, prior to the meet, or individually during the progress of the meet, must come from the Referee, or from a Chief on behalf of the Referee. The Technical Manager may also instruct certain officials at the Technical Official's pre-competition briefings.

Any special instructions or regulations applicable to the meet, originating from the Meet Committee, should be passed by the Technical Manager or Meet Director (Meet Management) to the Referee prior to the meet. The Referee and/or the Technical Manager will instruct appropriate Technical Officials accordingly during the pre-competition briefings.

Irrespective of the manner in which the Rules or decisions of Swimming NSW are promulgated (verbally, in writing, in a program or in the Almanac), the Referee is the Official who has the responsibility and duty to enforce such Rules and decisions where they are related to the actual conduct of the meet.

When a Referee believes that one of their decisions enforcing the Rules and decisions of Swimming may impact on the responsibilities of the Meet Management or the Meet Committee, the Referee should immediately inform Meet Management.

It is difficult to contemplate a situation that is "not otherwise covered by the Rules". However, if such a situation did arise in relation to the actual conduct of the meet, the Referee is responsible for settling the matter and taking appropriate action. It may be prudent to first consult with Meet Management, the Meet Committee or other officials but the final decision is the Referee's, and such responsibility cannot, and should not, be abdicated for any reason.

4.4. Meet Control and Appointments

The Referee's objective at any meet is to run a professional, enjoyable competition for all involved in the meet, including swimmers, Technical Officials and spectators.

This is also the objective of the Meet Committee, which has jurisdiction over all matters not assigned in the Rules to the Referee ([SW1](#)). The Meet Committee's representative is the Meet Management who has a responsibility for the efficient running and administration of the meet.

[Swimming NSW Appendices Appendix A](#) details the Duties and Responsibilities of the Technical Manager and Swim Meet Director.

The Meet Management:

- Prepares the venue
- Presents the entrants eligible to compete to the Referee
- Arranges presentation of awards after the official competition result has been declared
- Publishes the results

A Referee needs to develop a close working relationship with the Meet Management whose concern will be that the meet runs smoothly in order to promote the image of the Promoting Body, be it a State, Area or a Club.

Power to postpone events (or the meet) rests with both the Referee and the Meet Committee ([SW1](#)). Any unsafe environments for swimmers and Technical Officials, such as electrical storms, unfavourable weather conditions, pool water standards or pool conditions, are reasonable grounds for recommending cancellation or postponement of events/meets to the Meet Director.

The Meet Committee can give directions, consistent with the Rules, as to methods to be adopted for contesting any event, including starting over the top of the swimmers in the previous race.

The Rules ([SW2](#)) give the Referee authority to start a race prior to the swimmers in the previous race leaving the water.

Different circumstances can apply to different levels of competition owing to specific factors, time restrictions, pool layout, etc., which will affect the way that the Referee controls the competition.

State Championships follow either a heat and final, or a timed final competition format. They generally use Automatic Officiating Equipment (AOE), with Semi-Automatic Timing (SAT) equipment as a backup. Consequently, there are no Finish Judges' result sheets and no lane time/race entry cards. Place and time results from each race are fed electronically to a computer in the Recording area linked directly to the AOE.

Local competitions may not have access to AOE equipment, and these training notes identify relevant procedures and possible combinations of timing and judging systems.

The Referee and Technical Officials for State Championships and other State controlled meets are appointed by the Technical Swimming Committee ([SW1](#)) and notified via the [Officials Appointments and Roles link](#) on the SNSW website.

Appointments are also distributed by the SNSW Office to successful nominees via email. Two Referees and two Starters are generally appointed to each session. The Referees have equal status. The first-named Referee attends to the meet administration duties, including the compilation of the Referees' Report, in consultation with the second-named Referee.

- Where possible, Technical Officials for local meets should be arranged in conjunction with the Area's ATSC Coordinator by the Meet Committee. Technical Officials need to be informed of their appointment before the swim meet so they can arrive at the pool properly prepared. The Referee has authority to approve assignments on the day ([Rule SW2](#)) and, if possible, should be consulted before the meet.
- See [Section 4.8](#) below about the requirements of the Technical Swimming Committee for a Referee's Report to be submitted after State meets. For Area meets, it is suggested the Area Technical Swimming Coordinator receive similar reports to help keep track of the development of Technical Officials.

The dress requirements for Championships and State meets will be advised in the appointments notice. The Promoting Body may designate a variation to the uniform to meet obligations to Sponsors.

4.5. Essential Technical Officials

The numbers of Technical Officials required to efficiently conduct a swim meet in a ten-lane pool with AOE and SAT is shown in Table 1 below. These numbers would necessarily be increased for larger meets such as State Championships. The table also shows the variations for where there is:

- AOE and no SAT
- SAT and no AOE
- Where there are not three (3) timekeepers per lane

Where Claims/Withdrawals in lieu of check starting apply at a local meet, a Claims Official in lieu of the Check Starter and Clerk of Course, and one extra Recorder to take withdrawals are required.

Where only manual stopwatch timing is used and there are not three (3) Timekeepers per lane, there must be at least three (3) Finish Judges.

Table 1 - Recommended Numbers of Officials for a Ten Lane Pool

Position	Minimum Number	State Meet Minimum Number	Ideal	Comment
Referee	Two (2)	Two (2)	Two (2)	For local meets where there are fewer than the minimum number of TOs, the Referee should walk as JoS 1. Rotation of Referees between Referee and the other 3 JoS positions could also be considered for training and development (see also JoS below)
Starter	One (1)	Two (2)	Two (2)	
Judge of Strokes (JoS)	Two (2)	Four (4)	Four (4)	At a local meet where there are fewer than the minimum number of Officials, the Referee should walk as JoS 1. Rotation of Referees between Referee and the other 3 JoS positions could also be considered for training and development (see Referee above)
Inspector of Turns (IoT)	Nil (0)	Four (4)	Twenty-Two (22)	Gaining a full complement of IoTs is very difficult to achieve, even at a State meet. There should be a minimum of four (4) at any end, each covering 2 lanes, with the JoS covering the outside lanes. Twenty-Two (22) would allow for ten (10) at each end plus a Chief for each end. The finishing end should be populated first with Inspectors of Turns as they can operate timing mechanisms and maybe required to operate backstroke starting ledges.
Clerk of Course (Marshal)	Three (3)	Three (3)	Four (4)	For local meets, always roster the minimum number of CCs first, together with the Check Starters. Where men's and women's Marshalling Areas are significantly separated by distance, there should be at least two (2) per area. Where heats and finals are conducted, only two (2) CCs are needed for the finals session.
Check Starter	Two (2)	Two (2)	Four (4)	For local meets, always roster the minimum number of Check Starters first, together with the CCs.
Control Room Supervisor (CRS)	One (1)	One (1)	One (1)	Not required when not using AOE or SAT. Must be experienced at Recording, Meet Manager and AOE operation.

Position	Minimum Number	State Meet Minimum Number	Ideal	Comment
Recorder	Two (3)	Three (3)	Three (3)	One Recorder will be appointed as Chief. For local meets where there is a challenge to achieve the minimum number of Recorders, at least one very experienced Recorder should be the Chief. Trainee Recorders could then be used for the other positions. For meets using Finish Judges, an extra Recorder would be advisable to allow for any adjustment of times to match the Finish Judges' placings.
Computer Operator	One (1)	One (1)	Two (2)	Where heats and finals are conducted, only one Computer Operator is required for the finals session. The Computer Operator is responsible to the CRS or Chief Recorder.
AOE Supervisor	One (1)	One (1)	One (1)	There should always be an experienced person as a supervisor. Not required where there is no AOE, or when there is a CRS.
AOE	One (1)	One (1)	One (1)	Not required where there is no AOE
SAT	One (1)	One (1)	One (1)	Not required where there is no SAT
Announcer	One (1)	Two (2)	Two (2)	
Chief Timekeeper	One (1)	One (1)	One (1)	
Timekeepers	Twelve (12)	Twenty (20)	Thirty (30)	Where there is at least one (1) IoT per lane at the finish end, the IoT can operate a SAT button in lieu of a Timekeeper. If SAT only (no AOE) is in use, one (1) Timekeeper per lane should operate a manual stopwatch with their non-preferred hand. If there is AOE and no SAT, or SAT and no AOE, there will need to be two (2) reserve Timekeepers.
Finish Judges	Three (3)	Nil (0)	Nil (0)	If there is AOE and no SAT, Finish Judges are not required. If there is SAT and no AOE, and there are fewer than three (3) Timekeepers per lane, there will need to be three (3) Finish Judges. If the Timekeepers are using manual stopwatches and there are three (3) Timekeepers per lane, Finish Judges are not required. If the Timekeepers are using manual stopwatches and there are fewer than three (3) Timekeepers per lane, there will need to be three (3) Finish Judges.
Runner	Two (2)	One (1)	Two (2)	If there is AOE and no SAT, or SAT and no AOE, there will need to be at least two (2) Runners

4.6. Pre-Competition Day Responsibilities

The Referee's responsibilities commence before the meet starts. The Referee should:

- Inform the Meet Management of their availability
- Check to ensure availability at the pool of:
 - All necessary forms (Finish Judges' results sheets, recording sheets, Timekeepers' sheets, etc.) applicable to the competition
 - Programs for distribution to the Technical Officials
- Ensure a starting device is available (electronic, pistol and ammunition, hooter or any other starting device).

At NSW State Championships and other SNSW conducted meets, all Automatic Officiating and other equipment, forms, stationery, starting equipment and programs for the conduct of the meet are delivered to the pool by SNSW, under direction of the Meet Management.

At local competitions, the Referee should ascertain the conditions pertaining to the meet and check arrangements for matters relevant to their responsibilities such as:

- Appointment of Officials
- Provision of necessary forms and programs
- Provision of equipment such as:
 - False start rope
 - Starting and timing devices (AOE and/or SAT, stopwatches)
 - Lap counters
 - Communications systems (e.g. 2-way radios)
 - Finish Judges' stand (if needed)
- Marshalling Area, including:
 - Location
 - Environment (shelter)
 - Layout - separate areas for Men and Women, at SNSW Championships, layout of chairs and tables
 - Facilities, equipment and forms,
 - Adequate rostering of competent Officials

- Recording Area, including:
 - Location
 - Environment (shelter)
 - Facilities (e.g. power, communications to Marshalling)
 - Stationery
 - Adequate rostering of competent Officials
 - Runners

- Estimated Competition Time-Line

4.7. Day of Meet - Pre-Meet Commencement Responsibilities

The Referee has a number of responsibilities prior to each meet/session.

A Referee must be available at the pool at least one (1) hour before the advertised starting time of the meet (or the applicable session of the meet).

- It is suggested that Referees develop their own checklists and schedules of the matters they have to deal with prior to the commencement of the competition. This way, the checklist has meaning and relevance to the Referee
- It is suggested a Referee may need more than an hour. Be early - never late.

A Referee must have:

- A current copy of the [Rules of Swimming](#)
- A whistle
- Wristwatch
- Clipboard, pens/pencils and a pad
- Record application forms

Qualified Referees appointed to a Judge of Strokes or Inspector of Turns position also need this equipment, as they may be called upon to carry out the duties of Referee in some circumstances.

The Referee's uniform should set the standard for all Technical Officials and be an expression of their approach to their role and as a representative of Swimming NSW and the local Promoting Body.

4.7.1 Establish Relationships

On arrival at the pool for any competition, the Referee should introduce themselves to the Meet Management or Secretary of the Meet Committee and to the Pool Manager:

- As a courtesy which establishes a liaison in case the Referee needs assistance
- To confirm any special requirements of the Meet Committee e.g.:
 - Jury of Appeal
 - Programming requirements
 - Scheduled breaks and refreshments
 - The format and procedures for presentation ceremonies
- To check equipment availability
- To understand any pool set-up difficulties or constraints
- To find out any features that may impact on the meet (e.g., noise level regulations)
- To identify the estimated competition time
- To receive programs for distribution to Technical Officials as they report
- To ensure Starting, Marshalling and Check Starting procedures are published in the program. If not, check how the Meet Management intends notifying entrants so that Technical Officials can be briefed accordingly
- To make the Meet Management aware of the Referee's requirements including handling of protests, announcing procedures, posting of results and availability of runners etc.

The Referee should also work with the Meet Management to ensure that areas within the Meet Director's responsibilities have been, or are in the process of being, addressed, where these may impact the conduct of the meet. For example:

- The Referee will be informed of any impending delays or changes to the Presentation Sequence
- The Announcer has been briefed
- The Medal Ceremony Officer has been briefed:
 - About preparing recipients for presentation
 - About timing of presentations
 - About the Meet Committee's presentation ceremonies and procedures and liaison with the Announcer, Meet Management, presenters and escorts
 - About doping control

The Referee should also establish relationships with the other Technical Officials.

- Check all Technical Officials against the Officials' appointment notice/roster as they report and supply each with a program:
 - Appointments may be printed in the program for local meets
 - Technical Officials may be required by Promoting Bodies to sign an Official's Attendance Register
 - Technical Officials are also required by Swimming NSW to possess a current [Working With Children Check](#) (WWCC), and to provide their WWCC number accordingly at State Championships and all other approved meets.
- Appoint Chief Inspectors of Turns, Chief Recorder, Chief Timekeeper and Chief Judge (if required), if not already appointed
- Appoint substitute Officials to cover absentees or additional Officials if necessary
- Establish efficient communications and liaison between the necessary Technical Officials for the smooth running of the meet.

4.7.2 Competition Area Checks

The Referee should also undertake a pool check for example:

- Check the availability, positioning and tension of lane ropes, backstroke turn indicators and false start ropes:
 - This requires a tour of the pool and surrounds, possibly in conjunction with the Meet Management, who is responsible for arranging promptly any adjustments found necessary
 - Backstroke turn indicators will be needed at both ends of the pool for short and long course competition if the program includes backstroke or medley events, and are to be set at the correct positions and height above the water surface (refer to relevant [FINA rule](#))
 - False start ropes will be needed at each end if starting from both ends (refer to relevant [FINA rule](#))
 - At local meets you may need to check the pool facilities comply with the SNSW Rules ([GR1](#)), though they should be checked by the Meet Committee before choosing the venue
- Check the marshalling area in relation to:
 - The approach to the starting area
 - Lighting needs to be adequate
 - Liaison between officials

- Check the position of the AOE/SAT and computers, recording area, Announcer and presentation area
- Check the availability of all equipment, including lap counters if events of 800m or more are being contested
- Check the positioning of the Finish Judges' and Starters' stands (if in use)
- Check lighting levels for glare and adequate view of finish/start
- Check available weather protection for Technical Officials if an open pool

4.7.3 Brief the Officials

The Referee should brief all Technical Officials on their requirements prior to the start of the meet, no matter how competent or experienced the Technical Officials are. A Referee should never assume that everyone knows their responsibilities or the special requirements of the Meet Committee. This can be a challenge for a Referee who should be aware of:

- The experience level of the Technical Officials. The less-experienced the team of Technical Officials, the more careful and considered the Referee will need to be in preparing for and managing the meet
- Each Technical Official's familiarity with the environment and the role they are fulfilling. A very experienced Technical Official may be new to a pool or may not have performed in a particular role for a while
- Structuring the message to the audience. Sometimes briefings can be stiff or convey a Referee as overbearing.

Central themes in every briefing should be:

- Consistency:
 - Rule application
 - Behaviour
 - Movement / positioning
- Any doubt must be in favour of a swimmer
- Any special instructions including proper conduct around swimmers
- Workplace Health and Safety.
- This is a [Guideline for a General Briefing](#)
- A checklist for briefing various Technical Officials is included as [Appendix 2](#). These are intended as a preparation guide for briefing Technical Officials on the Referee's requirements before the meet starts.

At Championships and SNSW run meets, the Referee may delegate actions to the identified Chiefs (i.e.: Chief IoT, Chief Timekeeper, etc.). Referees should not have to detail the duties of each position to each Technical Official although each Official needs to be aware of the manner in which the Referee requires them to operate (including relief arrangements and comfort stop requests).

At local Area and Club meets the Referee may need to see that relatively inexperienced or new Technical Officials are more extensively briefed. The Referee should rely on the Chiefs in this case. A full team of Technical Officials may not be available e.g., it may not be possible to appoint an Inspector of Turns to each lane. This may alter the allocation of responsibilities for the Judges of Strokes. The briefing notes in [Appendix 2](#) will apply with some modification.

4.8. Post-Meet Responsibilities

Before a session concludes, the Referee should look for an opportunity to thank all the Technical Officials who have worked during the session. As the Officials leave the pool deck, the Referees should strategically place themselves where each pool deck Official can be acknowledged as they leave the competition area. The Referee should also make time to thank the Officials who work off-deck (Recorders, AOE Operators, Announcers, etc.).

The Referee should remain at the pool for at least thirty (30) minutes after the posting of the results for the final event in a session to be available to deal with any queries or protests that may arise from the last event. It is also an opportune time to reflect upon the session and conduct any debriefing activities with key people, such as:

- The Meet Management
- The Pool Manager
- The alternate Referee
- A Referee's mentor
- The Chiefs
- Any area where an exception may have occurred.

The State Technical Swimming Committee requires that a Referee's Report be submitted for each session at State Championships and State-run meets on a standard form. This is usually the responsibility of the first-named Referee (in consultation with the second-named Referee). See [Appendix 3](#).

The Referee is expected to report pertinent matters or those of interest to or requiring action by, the Technical Swimming Committee. As well as being the official report on the work of Technical Officials and general comments on the meet, the form is used for making recommendations or suggestions for further experience and for verifying experience for re-accreditation or when appointments at higher-level meets are being considered.

Areas are encouraged to require a Referee's Report for the Area Coordinator identifying issues relating to the appointment of Technical Officials' safety issues, operational issues and management issues.

5. Protocol

Protocols are a set of guidelines or rules that help deliver a consistent standard of behaviour and outcomes. A professional appearance at a swim meet depends on the following factors:

- Appearance - neat dress
- Attitude - body language can be observed by the spectators, coaches and swimmers, so a pleasant manner and good posture is important
- Consistency/uniformity of movement
- Being in position and appearing to focus on the job at hand
- Attitude can manifest itself in language and posture. Technical Officials choosing a positive attitude will inspire confidence in fellow Officials, spectators, coaches and swimmers.

The Referee may alter the standard protocol to meet the specific needs of a competition. For example, if there are insufficient Technical Officials available, individual duties and protocols may need to be adjusted.

The Meet Management may also alter protocols to meet the needs of the competition, such as when a meet is televised.

Therefore, the Referee must work collaboratively with the Meet Management to determine the most appropriate approach for the competition. Once a protocol is determined, the Referee is responsible for informing the Technical Officials of the expectations, including any change of protocol.

Where a standard protocol is understood, only the key exceptions need to be communicated.

The protocols for the various pool deck positions are included in the Training Notes for the respective accreditations. At the time of preparing these notes, the [Training Notes](#) for Check Starter, Clerk of Course, Starter, Inspectors of Turns and Judge of Strokes include protocols relevant to these positions.

5.1. The Referee as a Leader

The Referee is in a unique position as the senior swimming Technical Official at a meet. The Referee cannot perform all functions personally and yet is responsible for the efficient conduct of the meet. Where there is respect amongst the Technical Officials, the tempo and flow of the meet has a better chance of being maintained by the Officials performing their respective duties fairly, to the best of their ability, and in accordance with the Rules.

A quiet authoritative manner from the Referee, when briefing Technical Officials at the start of the meet as to how they want them to meet their responsibilities, will leave the Officials in no doubt as to what is required and expected of them. The clarity and conciseness of simple instructions will convey to the Officials that a Referee knows their job and will give them confidence to perform their own tasks well.

A Referee's performance will influence the performance of the team of Technical Officials. To command the respect due to the position, the Referee must:

- Act with integrity, dignity, certainty of purpose and knowledge
- Be pleasant, helpful and communicative when the need arises
- Show responsibility by being firm and exerting their proper authority when required
- Acknowledge a mistake when it occurs and take decisive action to correct the mistake without fuss
- Understand that the Technical Officials will be working under stress, often self-imposed, but also due to the repetitive nature of many of the tasks.

A Referee should limit any personal involvement with Officials and swimmers. Every action of the Referee is under constant scrutiny of spectators, coaches, Officials and swimmers. The Referee must be impartial, consistent, and without bias in behaviour and attitude towards swimmers and Officials.

The Referee must ensure that all swimmers receive an equal opportunity to compete and, that a consistent approach is maintained by all Technical Officials throughout the competition. Fairness and consistency must be the dominant principles underlying all decisions.

All Technical Officials are accountable to the Referee for the efficient and effective performance of their duties and their use of delegated authority. The Referee is accountable to Swimming NSW.

5.2. Positioning

For the start of a race, the Referee may stand either side of the Starter, with a view of all the competitors. From this position, the Referee must be able to see all swimmers at the start and must be able to monitor the Starter's decision about the fairness of a start. Remembering that a disqualification for starting before the starting signal must be observed and confirmed by both the Starter and the Referee.

Before the start, the Referee should do a quick scan of the pool, checking that all Officials are in position, that the pool is clear and ready for the race, and there are no obvious hazards. The Referee should do a quick scan of the competitors for any obvious swimsuit or body taping contradictions. Verify that the Check Starter is in position to indicate that all swimmers are in the correct lanes.

Prior to a race, where a scoreboard is in operation, the Referee should check that the correct event and heat number is shown, and shortly after the race has started, that the timing appears to be working.

The Referee will take an encompassing view of a race, including competitors and Officials. The Referee may walk an appropriate distance toward the 15 metre point, depending on the number of Judges of Stroke available and whether it is long course or short course. When circumstances require the Referee to maintain this observation of the race, it may be appropriate to move further down the pool.

From this position, the majority of reports on rule infractions are often a confirmation of an action that has already been observed by, or indicated to, the Referee during a race. The Referee will also be able to observe whether a Technical Official has moved from their position, indicating an infraction may have been observed.

As soon as practical, the Referee should notify the CRS/Chief Recorder of any disqualification. The AOE Operator and Chief Recorder would be advised where a CRS has not been appointed.

At the end of the race, the Referee should:

- Note the placing of all competitors and compare these placings with those displayed on the scoreboard (if available) for accuracy
- Scan the key Technical Official positions one last time to check for any reports that may be in the process of being reported
- Indicate to the CRS/AOE Operator/SAT Operator if the race is “all clear” or if there is an additional disqualification
- Signal the swimmers to clear the water, if appropriate, and where necessary, watch swimmers leave the water
- Move to the next race or resume their seat.

5.3. Management of Non-Pool Deck Areas

The Referee relies on the competency and experience of all Technical Officials, but this does not allow the Referee to dissociate themselves from the actual conduct of a race on the assumption that everyone will, at all times, carry out their delegated responsibilities to the Referee’s satisfaction.

The Marshalling and Recording Areas are often not visible from the competition area, so the Referee may not easily have knowledge of any challenges in these areas until there is an impact to the conduct of the meet.

Even if the meet appears to be flowing, a Referee should find an opportunity to check on these areas. This will most likely require the Referee to leave the deck.

5.4. Managing Conflict

In any swimming competition, conflict will be a normal occurrence because of competing interests and stakeholders. [Appendix 7](#) contains further background and considerations for conflict at a meet.

Referees are encouraged to undertake Conflict Resolution training where such opportunities are available.

5.5. Counselling Technical Officials

Should the occasion arise that a Referee needs to counsel a Technical Official for action or lack of action, it should be undertaken calmly in a dignified manner, away from other Officials, and not in view of spectators, coaches or swimmers. Referees cannot delegate this responsibility. The same principle applies when re-allocating an Official.

5.6. Leaving Pool Deck

Should the Referee need to leave the pool deck during a meet to deal with some other matter within their control/responsibility, there needs to be a handover to the alternate Referee or to a Judge of Strokes to maintain the continuity of the meet.

When there has been a handover, the Referee needs to wait until the heat or event that is in the water has been completed before resuming control.

Matters requiring a Referee to leave the deck could include:

- Dealing with a query
- Investigating a protest
- Determining a result when no AOE time was recorded
- Dealing with enquiries from the Control Room (CRS, AOE Supervisor or Chief Recorder)
- Management of non-pool deck areas
- Thanking Officials at the end of a session.

Note that leaving the deck to check on Marshalling or Recording or to thank Officials at the end of a session, should occur when the alternate Referee is attending to events normally within their control. Where a handover to a Judge of Strokes occurs, an Inspector of Turns should be appointed to replace the Judge of Strokes.

6. Applying the Rules

6.1. Guiding Principles and Responsibilities

The Rules of Swimming are created as standards of perfection and should be enforced as much as is practicable and reasonable, for the given standard of competition and to protect all swimmers. The human body is not a machine, so conformity to the Rules is often relative, not absolute. The Referee has some flexibility in applying the Rules.

Referees should use common sense, consistency and fairness in the application of the Rules. A reasonable attempt to conform to the rules should be the guiding principle for the young or inexperienced swimmer and for Multi-Class swimmers, taking into account the swimmers' physical development and competitive advancement.

Swimmers must only be disqualified for clear-cut infractions. Infractions that are marginal must be resolved in favour of the swimmer. The second object of Swimming NSW (after affiliation with SAL as necessary to achieve the objects) is to encourage, promote swimming activities in and throughout New South Wales ([Constitution 2b](#)).

The Refereeing Standards in the introduction of these notes are based on a competency statement prepared by Swimming Australia for SAL Referees. Swimming NSW has adopted this statement as the standard that SNSW Referees should reach and maintain. It is also regarded as a general guide as to the standards expected of other Technical Officials, at all levels of competition.

6.2. Technical Officials

Swimming [Rule SW2](#) explains in detail the duties and responsibilities of the Technical Officials who are working for a Referee.

The duties and responsibilities of all the Technical Officials should not just be known by the Referee, the Referee should have a thorough understanding and knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of each of the Technical Official positions. Prospective Referees should make the effort to re-visit the Training Notes for each of these positions, in conjunction with reading and understanding [SW2](#).

Particular attention should be paid to the duties and responsibilities of the Inspectors of Turns and Judges of Strokes.

6.3. General Conduct of the Meet

Under [Rule SW10](#), unauthorised persons are not permitted in the pool areas designated for competition for the swimmers and/or Officials. The Meet Management administers this rule but the Referee may need to ask the Meet Management to take action. The Clerks of Course and Check Starters also apply the rule to those areas of the pool deck where they operate, such as the Marshalling Area, so as to maintain good order.

This Rule is intended to assist the Meet Management to keep the immediate pool area and the working spaces as clear as possible. It can be applied to coaches, swimmers not in the event or being marshalled for their event, to media and to parents. To avoid any misunderstanding, the printed program should include a notice and or plan showing designated areas.

The following also apply to the general conduct of the meet:

- No pace making shall be permitted, nor may any device be used, or plan adopted which has that effect ([Rule SW10](#))
- Betting in any form is not allowed at a meet ([Rule GR25](#)). Areas, or promoting bodies, which fail to take prompt measures to suppress betting are liable to suspension.
- Smoking and/or the consumption of alcohol, is not permitted in any area designated for swimmers during the program at any Swimming NSW meet, either prior to or during competition ([Rule GR26](#)). The Referee administers this rule in relation to Officials and swimmers, and the Meet Director should take action in relation to others.

6.4. Multi-Class Swimmers

As per [Rule SW2](#), Multi-Class swimmers may compete in State approved meets in able bodied or non-specific MC events. When competing in these events the swimmers should personally present their Classification Card to the Referee prior to the start of the meet so that the Referee may note any Exceptions permitted on their program.

Where events are conducted in a Multi-Class format at SNSW meets, the Meet Management may provide the Referee with the list of exceptions for each athlete, by event prior to the commencement of the meet/session. Multi-Class swimmers may present their Classification Card during the conduct of a session.

[Appendix 5](#) includes a sample Classification Card as well as some discussion on Multi-Class swimming.

The Referee should apply the State approved [Multi-Class Swimming Rules](#) for all Multi-Class swimmers competing in State approved meets.

6.5. Swimwear, Devices and Advertising

[GR19](#) prescribes the requirements for swimwear, whilst [GR20](#) prescribes the advertising constraints, including those for all swimwear, caps, goggles and pool deck equipment. Referees should always review the latest rules prior to competition.

The Referee should remind the Clerks of Course and Check Starters, before the session, to check the swimwear of competitors, ensuring it complies with the Rules. Under FINA and SAL Rules, swimmers must be wearing FINA approved swimwear, identifiable by the FINA tag, for any FINA or SAL record to be approved. At State meets, a lower standard of swimwear is acceptable, as described in [GR19](#).

Referees should also be aware of the latest rules regarding body tape ([SW10](#)), and of the need to give consideration to medical needs when making decisions regarding taping on the body. [SNSW Taping Policy](#).

It is the responsibility of the Clerks of Course and Check Starters to check non-conformances prior to the race with a view to exclude the non-conforming swimwear, devices, advertising and tape from the pool deck and competition. Any breaches must be reported to the Referee where applicable, as swimmers should be given a reasonable chance to conform to the Rules. The Referee has the authority to exclude a swimmer whose swimsuit etc. does not comply. Whilst a swimmer wearing non-conforming swimwear may be disqualified after a race, this does not negate the need for diligence by Officials before a race. Referees should take into consideration the level of competition when considering the application of these provisions.

6.6. Heat and Lane Allocations

This matter is covered in [Rule SW3](#) (Starting Positions) and is discussed in detail in the Recorders' Training Notes, which prospective Referees should review in conjunction with [SW3](#). Additionally, the Clerks of Course and Check Starters have roles in managing swimmers reporting for events, withdrawals and placing swimmers in their lanes, as described in [SW2](#) and [GR9](#). Prospective Referees should also review these rules in conjunction with the Training Notes for Clerks of Course and Check Starters.

Entrants are required to submit their best competitive time for the event and to comply with the conditions of entry for any meet. For State Championships, the requirements are published in the [Swimming Almanac](#). Generally, the best time will have been achieved within the 12 months preceding the start of the current season. Some local meets may require the time to be a current season time. Under the [Competition Strategy Policy \(March 2015\)](#), local meets may have qualifying times and/or break times. Meet Directors should be able to resolve any doubt regarding entry time constraints.

The number of heats in any event is determined by the number of lanes (or the width of the course) and the number of swimmers but, because of the difficulty in judging a close finish in sprint events across more than eight (8) lanes, [Rule SW3](#) provides that finalists should not exceed eight if AOE is not used.

Where the meet is not pre-seeded, the Chief Recorder should keep the Referee informed of the number of heats and the number of swimmers in each heat after withdrawals have been made.

The Recorders Training Notes contain discussion about the placement of swimmers in lanes. Some final key points from [SW3](#) for Referees on placement of swimmers include:

- Scratch events with heats and finals
- Scratch events without finals (timed finals events)
- Specifically invited swimmers
- Minimum numbers in scratch event heats.

Marshalling instructions should always be printed in the program. For State meets this is described in [GR9](#) and swimmers are required to marshal at a time determined by the event management bearing in mind the type of meet and the nature of the competition.

If the marshalling instructions are not printed in the program, the Referee will have to decide what cut-off time is appropriate, having regard to pool layout, designated marshalling areas and the type of meet. The Clerks of Course and Announcer must be informed of this decision and the Referee must make sure swimmers, coaches and Team Managers are made aware of the marshalling arrangements. This is normally done via announcements by the Announcer.

Swimmers who report to the Clerk of Course are advised of their heat and lane number and immediately prior to their event, they are positioned behind their starting platform by the Check Starter who is responsible for ensuring the correct swimmer is in the correct event, heat and lane.

The Referee has authority, where withdrawals of swimmers make it possible, to amalgamate two or more heats into one heat or all heats into a final. Any alteration to the last heat should be kept to a minimum. The Referee also has authority to reseed an event. Where appropriate, this is applied at State Championships when the events are pre-seeded in the program. Whilst Rule [SW3](#) provides for swimmers who have not reported to the marshalling area by the prescribed time to be deemed to be withdrawals, Referees should allow for a balanced approach. Some considerations:

- Timely management of the meet versus swimmers having as much opportunity to swim as possible
- The benefit in gaining time versus the risk any reseed or amalgamation may cause in confusion:
 - For this reason, 50 metre events are generally not amalgamated at SNSW meets unless it is a straightforward amalgamation, completed early, of a very small first heat into a second and/or third heat
- Officiating to the level of the meet, for example:
 - Younger, less-experienced swimmers versus older swimmers
 - Being a good host versus running an efficient meet (being officious). For example, international and some interstate swimmers may not be familiar with SNSW marshalling and check starting procedures, especially where their home Country/State has self-marshalling / check starting (i.e. they just turn up to swim)
 - Open meets may have elite athletes entered in many events and, as such, they may not be able to conform to absolute rigid boundaries of reporting. For example:
 - It may be effective to arrange with a swimmer to report once for several events, where they have to back up for several events in succession
 - A swimmer may have media commitments
 - A swimmer may have sports science obligations under an elite program
 - The [Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority](#) (ASADA) may be undertaking random drug testing
 - A swimmer may have presentation commitments.

The computer database must know which swimmer is in each lane in each race, particularly when connected to the AOE. When computers are used, whether or not connected to the AOE, amalgamated/reseeded heat sheets should be produced so as not to delay the competition. This principle also applies in manual recording situations.

Where the program is not pre-seeded, Referees should ensure that they, the Recorders, the Clerks of Course (Marshals) and the Check Starters are aware of the procedures for establishing withdrawals prior to seeding the remaining swimmers into heats. [Rule SW3](#) provides the procedures concerning the reseeding of a final, after withdrawal of a finalist, in a competition with heats and finals.

6.7. The Start

The rules governing the start for scratch events are contained in [Rule SW4](#). This needs to be read in conjunction with [SW2](#) for the Starter's duties and responsibilities and any explanatory notes regarding the Starter and the start. The [Training Notes for Starters](#) should also be read, in conjunction with these Rules.

Prior to the session, the Referee should discuss with the Starter their respective positioning for the start. This is to make sure that the Starter is comfortable with the Referee's positioning and can easily observe both the Referee and all the swimmers.

Prior to the whistle, the Referee should check to see that the correct event and heat is displayed on the scoreboard and that the Check Starter is in the predetermined position to indicate that all swimmers for the heat are correctly placed in their respective lanes.

[SW2](#) requires the Referee to give a short series of whistles before the long whistle. At State meets, where circumstance warrant, e.g. long sessions, the short series may be omitted.

The Referee sounds a long whistle to instruct the swimmers to step up onto the starting platform.

In the case of a backstroke race, the Referee's whistle is an instruction for the swimmers to enter the water. A second, long whistle is sounded to instruct the swimmers to immediately take up their starting positions. This whistle should not be sounded until the heads of all swimmers have surfaced and they are in a position to hear it.

When they are satisfied that all swimmers are ready for the start, the Referee will indicate, with an outstretched arm, that the Starter has control. Before raising the arm, the Referee should allow all swimmers a reasonable time to settle. The aim is to allow the Starter to give the 'Take Your Marks' command immediately the arm is raised.

The Referee's arm is kept in the outstretched position until the Starter has started the race. However, if the Referee notices something that would hinder a swimmer's chances of obtaining a fair start, the lowering of the arm is an indication to the Starter not to continue with the start.

The Referee's whistle signal should be loud and long enough to alert everyone in the pool area that a race is about to start. This eliminates the need for the Announcer to call for quiet at the start of each race which would introduce a discontinuity to the starting sequence.

After each start the Referee should check with the Starter regarding their opinion of the fairness of the start. When the Referee and the Starter are in agreement, the Referee has the responsibility to disqualify any swimmer who starts before the starting signal.

The Referee has the final responsibility for ensuring that the start is fair to all swimmers.

Key considerations:

- The fairness of a start is a decision of fact determined by agreement between the Starter and the Referee
- The Referee should avoid engaging in lengthy discussions with the Starter after any start
- The Start Rule and penalties for false starting should be included in the program by the Meet Committee. Swimmers would normally be expected to know the rule. This may not necessarily be the case with development level, very young or inexperienced swimmers
- If, on being told to "Stand Down", one or more swimmers enter the water, the Referee and the Starter are required to decide whether the Starter's action was the cause of the false start. In these circumstances no penalty should apply
- [Rule SW4](#) sets out the procedure for starts. Under [Rule SW4.3](#), any swimmer starting before the starting signal has been given shall be disqualified:
 - If a swimmer starts before the Starter has sounded the starting signal:
 - The Starter refrains from continuing with the start and reports the offending swimmer(s) to the Referee
 - Any swimmers remaining on the starting platforms should be told to "Stand Down" from their blocks. After the disqualification, the starting procedure is recommenced with the remaining swimmers. An exception is that MC swimmers may be told to "Relax" where it is obvious there may be difficulty in dismounting and remounting the blocks.
 - If the starting signal sounds before the false start is declared, the race is allowed to continue, and the Starter reports the offender(s) to the Referee. Any disqualification is notified at the completion of the race.
 - If the Starter repeats the starting signal in error (or drops the false start rope) as a movement is detected, the start is nullified. All swimmers on the starting platforms for that start, are then recalled and the start is recommenced.
- The Starter can also report a swimmer to the Referee for wilfully disobeying an order or for any other misconduct taking place at the start

- The Starter's authority ceases when the race has commenced but in unusual circumstances where the chances of a swimmer have been prejudiced, the Referee may require the Starter to recall the swimmers. This is done by repeating the starting signal, together with the dropping of the false-start rope. Some examples for where the Referee may require a recall would include:
 - Mechanical failure such as a broken lane rope
 - Timing system failure that could not be recovered
 - A siren or other crowd noise occurring at the start
 - The Starter giving the starting signal before all swimmers are ready
 - Accidental dropping of the false-start rope interfering with a swimmer
 - A swimmer missing the start because the Check Starter has not checked all swimmers behind the starting platforms but has signalled the Referee that all were in position and ready for the start. In this case the Referee has several options available before deciding to stop the race.

The decision to recall swimmers should not be taken lightly. If the race is a final it is most likely the race will have to be re-swum after a suitable delay to allow the swimmers who had previously started to recover.

After each start the Referee should watch the swimmers enter the water, then check with the Starter and check the scoreboard to see that the timing system is working and recheck that the correct event and heat is displayed. Unless there has been an issue, the Referee's attention should be returned to the pool before the swimmers reach the 15 metre mark.

6.8. Starting Over the Top

The Referee, together with the Meet Management, may decide that races will be started before the Referee signals the previous race to leave the water. This is referred to as 'starting over the top'.

Before raising his arm to transfer control to the Starter, the Referee should check that all swimmers in the water are quiet and are close to the wall. In the case of a backstroke race, the Referee should check that all swimmers in the water have moved down the lane and are adjacent to the lane rope, giving the swimmer starting in the next race a clear start.

6.9. Refereeing the Strokes

A Referee must have a sound and exact knowledge of the Rules applicable to the strokes of swimming as well as a solid level of practical experience. Analysing and observing the phases in the stroke rules gives the Referee a solid basis for applying the rules.

The wording of the Rules is quite explicit as to what is intended and meant. The Referee's job is to apply the Rules, not interpret them.

The [Training Notes for Inspectors of Turns](#) and [Judges of Strokes](#) provide video instruction and explanations for how to apply the rules of swimming. Referees should review carefully each of the stroke rules as they apply in conjunction with these notes:

- Freestyle - SW5
- Backstroke - SW6
- Breaststroke - SW7
- Butterfly - SW8
- Medley Swimming - SW9

6.10. Relay Events

The Rules for relay swimming are covered within:

- [SW10](#) which covers:
 - The composition of a relay team including the reserves
 - The order of the swimmers
 - Swimmers leaving the pool after completion of their section
 - Fouls
 - Swimmers entering the water whilst the race is still being conducted, other than to swim their section
 - Swimmers commencing their section before the preceding teammate has completed their section
- [GR9](#) which covers:
 - the members of relay teams
 - the nomination of the order in which swimmers compete
 - substitution requirements.

For meets other than State meets, team lists must be submitted by a time specified in the conditions for the meet.

Only the Referee has authority to exclude from competing, a team that has not submitted the team composition by the prescribed time. The Chief Recorder monitors compliance with this Rule and will notify the Referee of any non-conforming team entry. The Referee may allow a team to compete because of extenuating circumstances.

Some starting platforms are equipped with sensors connected into the AOE that register the take-off by a swimmer. The AOE can then record the time difference between registration of the touch on the pad by the incoming swimmer and the take-off from the starting block by the departing swimmer.

Where available and calibrated, the times recorded by the AOE have precedence over the human decisions ([Rule SW13](#)) for the adjudication of relay change-overs, provided there is no failure of the equipment. Inspectors of Turns should still be instructed to observe relay take-offs and to record any observed infractions, as the Referee may consult them or they may be called to provide evidence in a Protest/Jury of Appeal situation.

Where AOE is not available or is not calibrated, change-overs are within the jurisdiction of the Inspectors of Turns ([Rule SW2](#)) and assisted by the Judges of Strokes, especially when an Inspector of Turns has not been appointed to each lane at both ends of the pool.

[Appendix 8](#) has a sample print out for the first change-over in a relay event.

Provided the AOE operator has programmed the AOE to record reaction times, this time difference (+ or -) will be printed out as the race progresses along with the cumulative running time as each swimmer activates the touch pad. A recorded time difference of greater than negative - 0.03 seconds is considered to be an infraction.

When the AOE is located near the Referee, they should check with the Control Room for any defaults after each round of change-overs. Otherwise, the Referee will need to check, at the end of the race, that all change-overs were clear, before declaring the result.

The AOE times recorded up to the point of disqualification are official times and should be recorded in the official results. This can be particularly important when the first swimmer has set a new record, but the team has subsequently been disqualified for an infraction in a later length of the relay.

6.11. Other Rule Application Considerations

Other Rule application considerations include:

- Accidental omission by an Official to carry out their duties does not prevent an event being properly conducted unless the omission has prejudiced the chances of any swimmer in a material way ([GR21](#))
- If an error by an Official follows a fault by a swimmer, the fault by the swimmer may be expunged ([GR22](#))
- A swimmer swimming over the course alone, must cover or swim the whole distance, according to the applicable rules ([SW10](#)), to qualify
- The swimmer must remain and finish a race in the same lane in which they started ([SW10](#))
- The swimmer must make physical contact with the end of the pool or course, the turn must be made from the wall and it is not permitted to take a stride or step from the bottom of the pool ([SW10](#))
- Standing on the bottom during freestyle events or during the freestyle length of medley events, shall not disqualify a swimmer but the swimmer shall not walk. Swimmers are not permitted to stand on the bottom during the butterfly, backstroke and breaststroke ([SW10](#))
- Obstructing another swimmer by swimming across another lane or otherwise interfering with another swimmer shall disqualify the offender. Intentional fouls should be reported to the Promoting Body who, in turn, shall report the matter to Swimming NSW. Should a foul endanger the chance of success of a swimmer, the Referee can allow the swimmer to compete in the next heat/round. If the foul occurs in a final or the last heat, the Referee can order a re-swim ([SW10](#))
- Pulling on the lane rope is not allowed ([SW10](#))
- In an individual event, any swimmer who is not entered in a race and enters the water during the conduct of an event, and before all swimmers have completed their race, may be disqualified from their next scheduled race in the meet ([SW10](#))
- Any relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member, other than the swimmer designated to swim that length, enters the water when the race is being conducted, before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race ([SW10](#))
- Swimmers shall not leave the water at the finish end of the pool on completion of the race until instructed by the Referee (whistle, signal or verbal). Referees should give consideration to the level of competition, backstroke races and the impact on the result of the event before applying this provision ([SW10](#)).

7. Disqualification

Only the Referee has the authority to disqualify swimmers for any violation of the Rules personally observed or which is reported to them by authorised Technical Officials. The Rule [\(SW2\)](#) require that these reports be on signed Rule infraction reports/cards.

Where an infraction is reported by an authorised Official, the Referee needs to be convinced that a clear infraction has actually occurred. It is not unreasonable for the Referee to seek clarification or further detail for the infraction, to establish that there is a full understanding of the infraction being reported by the Official. For example, should a non-simultaneous touch be reported, the Referee might seek clarification as to which hand did not touch the wall and by how much that hand missed the wall. The Referee will be the person approached by the swimmer, team manager or coach for clarification and will need a full understanding of the infraction in order to answer questions about it.

Under [Rule SW2](#) the Referee also has the power to disqualify any swimmer whose action during the conduct of an event, in the opinion of the Referee, is contrary to the good conduct of the meet.

7.1. Reporting Infractions

Infractions must be reported as soon as they occur. Judges of Strokes will report directly to the Referee. Infractions must be reported clearly, in terms of the relevant Rule and be supported by detail regarding the circumstances of the infraction.

The Inspector of Turns alerts the Chief Inspector of Turns of an observed infraction. The Chief Inspector of Turns will then advise the Referee via the radio that an infraction has been observed. The reporting Inspector of Turns will then make the Infraction Report directly to the Referee, while the Chief Inspector of Turns arranges for the lane to be covered in the Inspector of Turns' absence.

The reporting Official must be absolutely sure that an infraction has occurred and is obliged to make decisions independently of other Officials unless required otherwise by the Rules. The Referee should ask the reporting Official to explain carefully and in detail, the sequence of events observed.

Confirmation from another Official is not necessary and may not always be feasible, particularly when there is not a full team of Officials. Corroboration is helpful, if available.

The Referee may need to consider the experience of the reporting Official and the extent to which all swimmers are subject to the same degree of scrutiny. The Referee should support their Officials by acting on their reports whilst considering the degree to which the Referee tests the Official's understanding of the Rules and of the infraction observed, which will be important evidence in the event of a protest.

The report must be unequivocal and be stated in terms of the Rules and should indicate the extent of fault or perhaps the number of times the infraction occurred. For example:

- “Swimmer did not touch with both hands simultaneously at the 50m and 150m turns” in a 200m breaststroke race. Where possible the actual touch sequence, and an approximation of the distance between the touches, could be noted (though it would not be written on the Infraction Report), e.g., the touch was made by the left hand first, followed by the right, with the left hand being 7cm in front of the right
- “Swimmer executed more than one single arm pull whilst off the back to execute the 50m turn” for a turn in a 100m backstroke race. Where possible, the number of strokes taken by the swimmer could be noted
- “Swimmer executed non-simultaneous leg movements after the 50m turn” in a 100 metre butterfly race. The Official may be able to state the (approximate) number of alternating leg movements observed immediately after the turn.

Any uncertainty or area of doubt must be settled in the swimmer's favour.

As soon as the decision to disqualify is made, the Referee must inform the CRS/Chief Recorder by advising the event, heat and lane number.

The Referee should then ask the reporting Official to complete a Rule Infraction Card ([Appendix 9](#)). Upon receipt of the finished Infraction Card, the Referee should check it for accuracy. If there are errors in the compilation of the card, the Referee should ask the reporting Official to complete another Infraction Card. It is permissible for the Referee to give guidance as to the expected wording.

When completed and signed by both the reporting Official and the Referee, the Referee should hand the Infraction Card to the Control Room.

The SNSW Technical Swimming Committee, for consistency, encourages the use of the [Swimming Australia Rule Infraction Quick Reference Card](#) available from the Swimming NSW website. This gives suggestions as to best practice wording for infraction reporting but is not a substitute for a thorough knowledge of the Rules of Swimming.

7.2. Informing the Swimmer

The procedure at State meets is that disqualifications are announced directly from the Rule Infraction Card. The Control Room will make this available to the Announcer and collect it back after the announcement. Disqualifications are announced by Event, Heat and Lane Number. Disqualified swimmers are not identified by name.

At Area and Club meets where disqualifications are not announced, the Referee should, where possible, promptly advise the swimmer ([Rule SW2](#)) of the reason for disqualification. This must be expressed in terms of the relevant Rule. If the swimmer has disappeared into the crowd, before being notified, ask the Announcer (if an Announcer has been appointed) to have the swimmer report to the Referee.

In the interests of dignity and respect for the swimmer's privacy, swimmers should not be spoken to whilst in the water. Before giving the signal to clear the water, the Referee should be positioned so that they can give a proper and complete explanation to each offending swimmer after they get out of the water.

Young swimmers very often "freeze" and don't listen, hear or understand the Referee. A useful strategy is to invite them to get their coach, or where the Referee knows the coach and it is convenient, engage with the coach. This procedure could also be applied to "warnings" at development level meets, although the use of Stroke Correction Forms may remove the need to speak directly with the coach. See [Appendix 12](#).

When advising a swimmer of a disqualification, caution should be exercised to ensure Technical Officials are not assuming the role of a coach, nor in any way interfering with what a coach trains an athlete to do during a race. It is probable that the swimmer might in fact be doing exactly what their coach is instructing or training them to do. During competition, coaches rightly expect their charges to focus on what they have spent hours practising during their training sessions and do not want people putting doubt in their minds.

When speaking with a swimmer, the Referee should avoid the temptation to demonstrate with their hands, the correct or incorrect action. Such demonstration could be used against the Referee during a Protest situation.

7.3. Recording the Decision

Referees should always mark their program with details of all disqualifications in case of any enquires resulting from the disqualification. In particular, the nature of the infraction, the time the Chief Recorder was advised of the disqualification, and the time the swimmer was advised, either directly or by the Announcer from the Infraction Card.

The Referee must set in place arrangements to ensure the report is given to the Announcer promptly for announcement of the disqualification, after which the report is returned to the Chief Recorder for filing with other result documentation at the conclusion of the meet or session.

Documentation relating to the conduct of the meet is confidential and is in the custody of the Chief Recorder for safekeeping. The documents are not available for anyone to peruse except with the Referee's consent, a Jury of Appeal excepted.

All reporting Officials need to keep accurate records of their reports in terms of the relevant Rule, noting times and subsequent actions in their program, e.g. "2.30 pm, H2/L3, swimmer failed to touch with both hands simultaneously at the 50m turn in breaststroke Ev36, reported to Referee".

7.4. Rule Consideration

Another challenge Referees face is the level of athlete swimming at a competition. For example, the [Competition Strategy Policy \(March 2015\)](#) provides for three levels of meet which include:

- Championship Meet,
- Qualifying Meet,
- Development Meet.

The Development Meet guidelines recommend Rule Consideration for 8 years and under.

The principle is that Development Meets are lower level or novice meets, targeted at encouraging participation in the sport.

There are likely to be other lower level or novice type swimming meets such as school carnivals and certain levels of Club races where the principle is encouragement and the swimmers competing in the meet are judged as being of the following:

- A novice
- Just having a swim for fun
- Doing their best with no chance of filling a place

There will certainly be Qualifying meets where such swimmers may also be competing. There could be a chance that such a swimmer may achieve a qualifying time for a higher-level meet and therefore should be disqualified for any rule infractions observed.

When using [Rule Considerations](#) at a meet, the Referee should consider the use of SNSW Swimming Stroke Correction Forms. These provide an easy way for Referees to communicate directly with parents and coaches, avoiding the problem of young swimmers failing to remember what was said to them.

Technical Officials and, in particular Referees, will be confronted with the dilemma of whether to disqualify swimmers and such a decision may not be readily accepted, and can lead to confusion, emotion and confrontation.

At Area Championship and higher-level meets, as well as any meet where:

- There is prize money
- Significant reward and/or recognition, such as the opportunity to compete at a School Area Meet, i.e. a school Area meet which is one level below Public Schools State.
- A personal best time qualifies a Swimmer to compete at an Area, Metropolitan, Country, State Age or State Open Championship.

At this level the integrity of the sport and of the Technical Officials, will require disqualification for Rule infractions.

7.5. To Disqualify or Not Disqualify

All officials should ask themselves if anything will be achieved if they disqualify a swimmer at a Development, Encouragement or even a Qualifying meet where a swimmer is unlikely to fill a place or achieve a qualifying time. Where Rule Considerations apply, this is a lot easier for the Referee to resolve.

Most Clubs have their own domestic rules, which allow for younger age groups to develop their strokes without disqualification. The rules will vary from Club to Club, but generally include a time and/or distance consideration.

Usually a warning and/or discussion with the Swimmer's Coach or Parents (in that order), occur before any disqualification is made. It is likely that, at Club level, the Referee and other Officials would generally be familiar with the swimmer and would be able to follow through with the coach on any stroke improvement on a week-to-week basis.

At meets external to Club competition, challenges can arise where the Referee is not aware of the swimmer's background and ability. It is a good idea for Referees to ask the Meet Director how strictly they want the meet refereed prior to the meet commencing.

Although the Rules of Swimming, as circulated, are applicable to all levels of competition including the lower level of competition, common sense and discretion should prevail. The philosophy of a reasonable attempt to do the stroke correctly, must be taken into consideration. A less stringent application of the Rules at the start, turns and finish of a race may also be necessary.

Rule Consideration is a challenge for Technical Officials and for Referees as leaders. Referees need to make a decision in relation to how the rules will be applied to developing swimmers and how they will be informed of any breaches of the Rules. This needs to be consistently applied throughout the meet, so this decision needs to be conveyed to all Officials at the meet during the briefing.

The competence level of all the swimmers in an event should also be considered when determining the result. This includes the principle that a swimmer who is performing the stroke correctly should not be beaten by a swimmer who is gaining an unfair advantage by not performing the stroke correctly. This principle must be considered where there is reward for a swimmer's placing such as winning a medal or advancing to the next level at a school meet.

If the decision is made to enforce a disqualification, the Referee should advise the swimmer in a friendly, helpful and non-intimidating manner. The swimmer should not be spoken to in full view of the other swimmers or spectators. Where possible, the swimmer should be taken aside and the reason for the disqualification should be explained to them, first in terms of the Rule and then in simple terms that are easy for a younger swimmer to understand. Referees should always consider where it might be more appropriate for the swimmer's coach or parents (in that order) to be involved in the explanation.

Above all, a few words of encouragement to the junior swimmer, commenting on something that they have done well, the advice to keep trying and an instruction to talk with their coach about the problem, is very important. Caution must, however, always be exercised when advising the swimmer of a disqualification so as not to use any action that could be considered inappropriate.

7.6. Questions from the Coach

Following a disqualification, the Referee should expect to be approached by the coach of the swimmer affected for an explanation of their action. This should not be regarded as a threat but rather as an opportunity to assist the swimmer to improve their swimming.

The Referee should hand over control to another Official ([section 5.6 above](#)), introduce themselves and ascertain the coach's query. They should listen carefully to the coach and be willing to consider any new evidence such as video, presented by the coach.

The response from the Referee should be in the words of the Rules and should be delivered in a considered, calm and friendly manner. Having made their decision, if the coach is still unsatisfied, the Referee should advise them of the procedures for a Protest ([Section 9 below](#)). The Referee should not let the conversation go on after this point.

8. Determining the Result

Irrespective of the system in use, it is good management for Referees to judge and record the result of the race. When using AOE or SAT and a scoreboard, the Referee should check their results against those shown on the scoreboard. Where there is no scoreboard, it would be good practice for the Referee to record their placings on their program. This will provide an independent check of relative places, if required, and perhaps provide an indication if the AOE has failed or not been activated by the swimmer in one or more lanes. When Finish Judges are used, the Referee will take placings in all events ([Rule SW2](#)).

Determining the result for an event is covered in [Rules SW11](#) and [SW13](#). Prospective Referees should review these Rules in conjunction with the Recorder Training Notes.

There are two activities involved in determining the result:

- Determination of the official times in each heat and, thus, the places (i.e. the relative order of finish) for that heat
- Determination of the relative order of finish for the event from the official times from all the heats. This is generally the Recorders' role but may need to involve the Referee.

The procedures to be applied depend on the combinations of judging/timing equipment used and on the particular circumstances of a meet at which automatic equipment is used.

There are several possible combinations of equipment or Officials that can provide primary and backup systems:

- **AOE:** With this equipment, the timing is started by an electronic signal from the Starter and stopped by the swimmers activating a touch pad at the end of the pool. When used, this is the primary system and it is normally supported by a secondary or back-up system.
- **SAT:** With this equipment, the timing is started by an electronic signal from the Starter and stopped by a Timekeeper pressing a button when the swimmer finishes the race. This may be used as the primary system at a meet or as the back-up system for AOE.
- **Hand-held digital stopwatches:** These are started by the Timekeepers at the starting signal from the Starter and stopped by the Timekeepers when the swimmer finishes the race. This would be the primary system at a meet without electronic timing but can be used as the back-up system for a meet using either AOE or SAT.

At FINA meets such as Olympic Games, World Championships and Commonwealth Games, and Australian Championships, AOE is used as the primary timing system with High Speed Video (HSV) equipment recording at 100 frames per second using cameras suspended above the lanes at the finish wall as backup.

At NSW Championships and major meets at suitably equipped venues, AOE is used as the primary system with SAT as the backup.

At local meets, depending on equipment available:

- AOE as the primary system, with SAT as the backup. However, this most likely is operating from common wiring harnesses, lane modules and a timing control system (e.g. ARES21, Laptop and single thermal printer) which has several single points of failure. A single digital stopwatch per lane, operated by one of the Timekeepers, using their non-preferred hand, is recommended as a backup
- AOE as the primary system, with digital stopwatch timing as backup. Finish Judges will be required if there are fewer than three Timekeepers per lane
- SAT as primary. Finish Judges will be required if there are fewer than three Timekeepers per lane, with a single manual stopwatch as backup
- Digital stopwatch timing only. Finish Judges will be required if there are fewer than three Timekeepers per lane.

12/09/2015 – 10:40:25 AM
 168 – 200m – F17-18 FR – T 1
 Heat Opened
 START 10:40:25.4704
 Heat started

TP	0.57	<--	L1,	Lap 0
TP	0.60	<--	L2,	Lap 0
TP	0.57	<--	L3,	Lap 0
TP	0.57	<--	L4,	Lap 0
TP	0.59	<--	L5,	Lap 0
TP	0.65	<--	L6,	Lap 0
TP	0.62	<--	L7,	Lap 0
TP	0.63	<--	L8,	Lap 0
TP	25.98	<--	L5,	Lap 1
TP	27.21	<--	L7,	Lap 1
TP	28.46	<--	L4,	Lap 1
TP	29.94	<--	L2,	Lap 1
TP	30.06	<--	L3,	Lap 1
TP	31.50	<--	L1,	Lap 1
TP	32.14	<--	L6,	Lap 1
TP	32.91	<--	L8,	Lap 1
TP	54.96	<--	L5,	Lap 2
TP	59.64	<--	L3,	Lap 2
TP	59.89	<--	L7,	Lap 2
TP	1:01.52	<--	L6,	Lap 2
TP	1:01.62	<--	L4,	Lap 2
TP	1:02.33	<--	L2,	Lap 2
TP	1:05.07	<--	L8,	Lap 2
TP	1:05.52	<--	L1,	Lap 2
TP	1:23.84	<--	L5,	Lap 3
TP	1:24.56	<--	L3,	Lap 3
TP	1:25.74	<--	L7,	Lap 3
TP	1:27.36	<--	L4,	Lap 3
TP	1:28.11	<--	L2,	Lap 3
TP	1:31.52	<--	L6,	Lap 3
TP	1:35.46	<--	L8,	Lap 3
TP	1:37.60	<--	L1,	Lap 3
B3	1:51.45	<--	L5,	Lap 4
TP	1:51.48	<--	L5,	Lap 4
TP	1:51.57	<--	L2,	Lap 4
B2	1:51.67	<--	L5,	Lap 4
B1	1:51.70	<--	L5,	Lap 4
B3	1:51.70	<--	L2,	Lap 4
B2	1:51.73	<--	L2,	Lap 4
TP	1:52.41	<--	L3,	Lap 4
B1	1:52.44	<--	L3,	Lap 4
B3	1:52.46	<--	L3,	Lap 4
B2	1:52.50	<--	L3,	Lap 4
TP	1:53.92	<--	L4,	Lap 4
B3	1:54.00	<--	L4,	Lap 4
B2	1:54.06	<--	L4,	Lap 4
B3	1:55.69	<--	L7,	Lap 4
TP	1:55.80	<--	L7,	Lap 4
B2	1:55.97	<--	L7,	Lap 4
TP	1:56.35	<--	L6,	Lap 4
B2	1:56.41	<--	L6,	Lap 4
B3	1:56.46	<--	L6,	Lap 4
B1	1:56.49	<--	L6,	Lap 4
TP	1:59.81	<--	L8,	Lap 4
B3	1:59.86	<--	L8,	Lap 4
B2	1:59.88	<--	L8,	Lap 4
TP	2:03.03	<--	L1,	Lap 4
B3	2:03.13	<--	L1,	Lap 4
B1	2:03.15	<--	L1,	Lap 4
B2	2:03.18	<--	L1,	Lap 4

Figure 1 - Example of AOE, SAT and Digital Watch Results

Figure 1 shows a simulated set of times taken by the three methods as examples of the timing information a Referee may be presented with for a decision. At any one meet, there would be only 2 timing systems in use at most. The example shows representations of the printout from a Quantum machine of the type currently in use at SOPAC. The printouts from other timing systems include the same information and are similar in layout.

```
*****
168 – 200m – F17-18 FR – T 1
Results for finish
Start Time:      10:40:25.4704

Rk La           Time
  1 5           1:51.48
B-Up           1:51.67 (0.19)
B1:            1:51.70
B2:            1:51.67B
B3:            1:51.45

  2 2           1:51.57
B-Up           1:51.71 (0.14)
B1:            --:--
B2:            1:51.73
B3:            1:51.70

  3 3           1:52.41
B-Up           1:52.46 (0.05)
B1:            1:52.44
B2:            1:52.50
B3:            1:52.46B

  4 4           1:53.92
B-Up           1:54.03 (0.11)
B1:            --:--
B2:            1:54.06
B3:            1:54.00

  5 7           1:55.80
B-Up           1:55.83 (0.03)
B1:            --:--
B2:            1:55.97
B3:            1:55.69

  6 6           1:56.35
B-Up           1:56.46 (0.11)
B1:            1:56.49
B2:            1:56.41
B3:            1:56.46B

  7 8           1:59.81
B-Up           1:59.87 (0.06)
B1:            1:48.05
B2:            1:48.02B
B3:            1:47.81

  8 1           2:03.03
B-Up           2:03.15 (0.12)
B1:            2:03.15B
B2:            2:03.18
B3:            2:03.13
```

Unless indicated otherwise, the examples used here and throughout this document, are all based on the printouts generated by Quantum machines.

Digital Stopwatch Official Times:		
Place	Lane	Lane Times
1	5	1:51.68
2	2	1:51.73
3	3	1:52.43
4	4	1:54.08
5	7	1:55.89
6	6	1:53.62
7	8	1:59.91
8	1	2:03.19

The left-hand section is the running log, as printed during the course of the race.

The first column records the manner of input received, either TP or B. TP indicates a time recorded by the touchpad, while B indicates a time recorded by a Timekeeper's button, with the following number indicating which specific button. The second column indicates the time recorded. Following the time is an indicator of the direction the swimmer was travelling to record that touch. The remaining two columns record the number of the Lane and the number of laps recorded for that lane.

The first set of times (e.g., 0.57 for Lane 1, Lap 0) record the reaction time for the swimmer leaving the starting platform.

The middle section is the result of the race, as printed by the Quantum machine when the operator presses the F11 key to finalise the race.

Normally this will be joined to the previous section as one continuous slip.

This slip records the finishing order or rank (Rk) of each lane (La) and the time recorded by the swimmer activating the touchpad for that lane. Underneath that is recorded the back-up time (B-up) and the difference between the backup time and the pad time. Lane 5 was recorded as finishing in position 1 with a touchpad time of 1:51.48 and a backup time of 1:51.67, with a difference of 0.19 between the two times.

Immediately beneath the backup time the times recorded by each of the three buttons for that lane are recorded. The presence of a B following one or more of the times, indicates that the system has registered this time as the official backup time. For Lane 5 the Timekeeper operating button number 2 has recorded the official backup time - the middle time of the three times recorded.

Note that for the second placed finisher Lane 2, no button has the B. This is because no time was recorded by button 1 (indicated by the notation --.--). In this case the Quantum system automatically averages the two times recorded to give the official backup time.

Finally, the right-hand section records the official stopwatch times for the race.

8.1. Determination of Official Times

This section reviews the determination of official times with various combinations of equipment or Officials providing primary and backup information, and some of the various potential circumstances that can occur during a meet.

8.1.1 Delegation of Authority

To enable the smooth flow of the meet it is advisable for the Referee to delegate their authority to the CRS / AOE Supervisor or to the AOE Operator, allowing them to amend the AOE results when it is clear that there has been an issue that has resulted in the AOE failing to record an accurate finish time on any lane. This removes the need for the Supervisor or Operator to come out onto the pool deck and have the Referee determine every adjustment.

When using the Quantum timing system, such discrepancies are highlighted on the screen as the swimmers finish. The AOE Operator and Supervisor will be able to notice and amend these discrepancies before the Referee gives the all-clear signal at the end of the race.

Where there is an issue that does not have an immediately apparent solution, where there is a question as to what action to take, will the Supervisor/Operator need to approach the Referee.

Therefore, many of the situations illustrated below will not be brought to the attention of the Referee but will need to be acted upon by the delegated Operator/Supervisor. Nevertheless, the Referee must be aware of the processes involved and be able to undertake these actions as required.

8.1.2 AOE Used as Primary

Where AOE is used as the primary system, the times recorded by the AOE are used to determine the time applicable to each lane and all placings, unless there is a clear indication of a failure of the AOE to accurately record the time of one or more swimmers.

The official time for a swimmer, not having an AOE time is the time obtained from the backup system (HSV, SAT or digital stopwatches).

The times and places determined by the AOE have precedence over the decisions of Timekeepers and any Finish Judges. This also applies to relay take offs judged by such equipment.

The Referee or the AOE Supervisor/ CRS, under the delegation of the Referee, should always compare the times recorded for each race by the AOE with those recorded by the backup, checking for discrepancies between the two sets of times which may indicate a malfunction of the AOE and also for equal times.

SAT times are generally slower than AOE times by approximately 0.10 seconds and manual stopwatch times are generally faster than AOE times by about 0.03 seconds.

The relative order of finish for an event is determined by comparing all of the official times (AOE or a combination of AOE and SAT/manual times) from all heats or finals and the procedures are discussed under Determination of Official Places in [Section 8.3](#) below. Recorders perform this task. Computer programs (e.g. Meet Manager) linked to the AOE, will print the event result from the AOE times recorded but the reports must be checked for accuracy by the Recorders including any disqualifications.

8.1.3 If AOE fails and SAT is backup

If the primary AOE system fails to accurately record the time or place for one or more lanes, the official time for each of those lanes will be the SAT time. A SAT time cannot be substituted for a time of a lane for which the AOE has recorded a time, unless there is a clear indication that there has been a failure of the AOE for that lane or that the swimmer has not correctly activated the equipment.

Discrepancies between the two times indicative of a malfunction of the AOE would have been identified by the Control Room under the delegation of the Referee, as part of the post-race checks. The Chief Recorder should also have been instructed to check for instances of where backup times should have been used and also for where backup times have been used, to verify this has been done correctly. Any suspected discrepancies noted by the AOE Supervisor/CRS or the Recorders must be drawn to the Referee's attention.

No hard and fast rule can be given for the size of the discrepancy between AOE and SAT times which definitely indicates a malfunction of the AOE since, as noted above, SAT times are slightly slower than AOE times and manual stopwatch times are slightly faster than AOE times. Generally, however, a discrepancy of greater than 0.30 seconds faster or slower than the AOE time should be investigated to see if there is evidence of a failure of the AOE to record the correct time.

Where there is evidence that there has been a failure of the AOE to correctly record the time for one or more lanes, the official time obtained from the backup is used in place of the incorrect or missing AOE time. The use of official times obtained from a SAT can be used for records provided three Timekeepers operated the buttons on that lane.

Examples of the type of evidence which could confirm a failure of the AOE are:

- A swimmer may just fail to touch with one stroke and then touch with the next and the Timekeepers accidentally time the first. This may be noticed by the Referee or a Judge of Strokes, by the Timekeepers, by the AOE Operator, or by the CRS. This would give a SAT time faster than the AOE
- Conversely, an indistinct first touch may operate the mechanism but not be timed by the Timekeepers who time a later touch. This may be noticed by the Referee, a Judge of Strokes, the AOE Operator or the CRS. This would result in a SAT time slower than the AOE (See Figure 4)
- A swimmer may not operate the mechanism at the first touch - called a soft touch - which would be timed by the Timekeepers but may do so later with another stroke or deliberate touch again after the finish. This may be noticed by the Referee or a Judge of Strokes, by the Timekeepers themselves, by the AOE Operator or by the CRS. The Timekeepers would have timed the first soft touch and this would result in a SAT time faster than the AOE (see Figure 4).

The Control Room, acting under the delegated authority of the Referee should check the spread of SAT/manual times on the lane in question to help in deciding whether or not a discrepancy indicates an AOE failure.

**Figure 2 - AOE misses a time.
SAT becomes the official time**

```
*****
168 – 200m – F17-18 FR – T 1
Results for finish
Start Time:      10:40:25.4704

Rk La          Time
 1 5           1:51.48
B-Up          (0.19)
B1:          1:51.67
B2:          1:51.70
B3:          1:51.67B

 2 2           1:51.57
B-Up          (0.14)
B1:          ---
B2:          1:51.73
B3:          1:51.70

 3 3           ---
B-Up          1:52.46
B1:          1:52.44
B2:          1:52.50
B3:          1:52.46B

 4 4           1:53.92
B-Up          (0.11)
B1:          ---
B2:          1:54.06
B3:          1:54.00

 5 7           1:55.80
B-Up          (0.03)
B1:          ---
B2:          1:55.97
B3:          1:55.69

 6 6           1:56.35
B-Up          (0.11)
B1:          1:56.49
B2:          1:56.41
B3:          1:56.46B

 7 8           1:59.81
B-Up          (0.06)
B1:          1:48.05
B2:          1:48.02B
B3:          1:47.81

 8 1           2:03.03
B-Up          (0.12)
B1:          2:03.15B
B2:          2:03.18
B3:          2:03.13
```

In **Figure 2**, the slip shows that the AOE has failed to record a time for Lane 3. The SAT time of 1:52.76 will be the official time.

Acting under the delegated authority of the Referee, this operation can be completed by the AOE Operator prior to the race being finished. Before initiating any action, the AOE Supervisor/Control Room Supervisor should check that the times recorded by the Timekeepers do not have a large spread, an occurrence that would bring the accuracy of the Timekeepers' results into question.

Such a slip would be like the example in **Figure 3**. Note that the official time for Lane 3 now has the annotation 'B' alongside.

Other possible annotations are 'A' which indicates that the time inserted is the average of two SAT buttons and 'E' which indicates that the time appearing on the slip has been edited by the AOE Operator.

Also note that the slip has now been signed by the person verifying the result. Either the Referee, the AOE Supervisor/Control Room Supervisor or the AOE Operator.

**Figure 3 - AOE misses a time.
SAT time has been inserted as the official time**

```
*****
168 – 200m – F17-18 FR – T 1
Results for finish
Start Time:      10:40:25.4704

Rk La          Time
 1 5           1:51.48
B-Up          (0.19)
B1:          1:51.70
B2:          1:51.67B
B3:          1:51.45

 2 2           1:51.57
B-Up          (0.14)
B1:          ---
B2:          1:51.73
B3:          1:51.70

 3 3           1:52.46B
B-Up          (0.00)
B1:          1:52.44
B2:          1:52.50
B3:          1:52.46B

 4 4           1:53.92
B-Up          (0.11)
B1:          ---
B2:          1:54.06
B3:          1:54.00

 5 7           1:55.80
B-Up          (0.03)
B1:          ---
B2:          1:55.97
B3:          1:55.69

 6 6           1:56.35
B-Up          (0.11)
B1:          1:56.49
B2:          1:56.41
B3:          1:56.46B

 7 8           1:59.81
B-Up          (0.06)
B1:          1:48.05
B2:          1:48.02B
B3:          1:47.81

 8 1           2:03.03
B-Up          (0.12)
B1:          2:03.15B
B2:          2:03.18
B3:          2:03.13
```

▲ S uper

Figure 4 illustrates a case where there is evidence that the AOE appears to have failed to record the correct time for two lanes and, on examination, a SAT time used as the official time for one of these lanes but not the other.

Figure 5 illustrates the slip where the AOE Operator has inserted the backup time as the official time for Lane 7.

Figure 4 - Significant discrepancies between AOE and SAT times

```
*****
168 – 200m – F17-18 FR – T 1
Results for finish
Start Time:      10:40:25.4704

Rk La           Time
  1  5           1:51.48
B-Up           1:51.67 (0.19)
B1:            1:51.70
B2:            1:51.67B
B3:            1:51.45

  2  2           1:51.57
B-Up           1:51.71 (0.14)
B1:            --:--
B2:            1:51.73
B3:            1:51.70

  3  3           1:52.41
B-Up           1:52.46 (0.05)
B1:            1:52.44
B2:            1:52.50
B3:            1:52.46B

  4  4           1:53.92
B-Up           1:54.03 (0.11)
B1:            --:--
B2:            1:54.06
B3:            1:54.00

  5  7           1:56.35
B-Up           1:55.83 (0.52)
B1:            1:55.83B
B2:            1:55.84
B3:            1:55.81

  6  6           1:56.35
B-Up           1:56.78 (0.33)
B1:            1:56.49
B2:            1:56.95
B3:            1:56.78B

  7  8           1:59.81
B-Up           1:59.87 (0.06)
B1:            1:48.05
B2:            1:48.02B
B3:            1:47.81

  8  1           2:03.03
B-Up           2:03.15 (0.12)
B1:            2:03.15B
B2:            2:03.18
B3:            2:03.13
```

The SAT time for Lane 7 is 0.52s faster than the AOE time, and the AOE Operator reports that the time came up well after the swimmer had finished, therefore the SAT time of 1:55.38 is inserted as the official time.

The SAT time for Lane 6 is 0.33s slower than the AOE time. On examining the SAT times, it is apparent that there is no consistency to the times recorded by the Timekeepers. When questioned by the Referee, the Timekeepers state that they were distracted and slow to react to the finish. The AOE time will be the official time.

Figure 5 - Significant discrepancies between AOE and SAT times amended by AOE Operator

```
*****
168 – 200m – F17-18 FR – T 1
Results for finish
Start Time:      10:40:25.4704

Rk La           Time
  1  5           1:51.48
B-Up           1:51.67 (0.19)
B1:            1:51.70
B2:            1:51.67B
B3:            1:51.45

  2  2           1:51.57
B-Up           1:51.71 (0.14)
B1:            --:--
B2:            1:51.73
B3:            1:51.70

  3  3           1:52.41
B-Up           1:52.46 (0.05)
B1:            1:52.44
B2:            1:52.50
B3:            1:52.46B

  4  4           1:53.92
B-Up           1:54.03 (0.11)
B1:            --:--
B2:            1:54.06
B3:            1:54.00

  5  7           1:55.83B
B-Up           1:55.83 (0.00)
B1:            1:55.83B
B2:            1:55.84
B3:            1:55.81

  6  6           1:56.35
B-Up           1:56.78 (0.33)
B1:            1:56.49
B2:            1:56.95
B3:            1:56.78B

  7  8           1:59.81
B-Up           1:59.87 (0.06)
B1:            1:48.05
B2:            1:48.02B
B3:            1:47.81

  8  1           2:03.03
B-Up           2:03.15 (0.12)
B1:            2:03.15B
B2:            2:03.18
B3:            2:03.13 SUPER
```

8.1.4 If AOE fails and Digital Stopwatches are the backup

Digital stopwatches, reading to 1/100th of a second, may be used as a backup to the AOE. In these circumstances, the same principles apply as for SAT backup.

If the AOE primary system fails to record a time or place for one or more lanes in a race, the official time for each of those lanes will be the official time for that lane as determined from the 3 digital stopwatches in accordance with [Rule SW11](#). If there are too few Timekeepers to have 3 digital stopwatches per lane, the official time for a lane on which the AOE fails to record a time will be determined in accordance with Rules [SW13](#) and [SW 11](#).

Where official times determined in this way do not agree with Finish Judges' placings, the conflicting time is adjusted in accordance with [Rule SW13](#). The Recorders perform this task, under delegated authority from the Referee but the Recorders should bring each case to the Referee's attention before posting any result that includes a time adjusted in this way.

Figure 6 illustrates a case where the AOE fails to record a time for a lane and a digital stopwatch time becomes the official time for that lane. Since this is unlikely to happen at SOPAC with the Quantum system, an example using an OSM 6 slip is provided.

**Figure 6 - AOE fails to record a time for one lane.
Official digital stopwatch time is used.**

OMEGA SWIM-O MATIC			
OSM 6			
ARMING	:		15
LAPS	:		02
PROG	:		AUTO
EVENT	:	038 HEAT	: 08
READY FOR NEW RACE			
EVENT:		038 HEAT	: 08
P		09.12:10.46	
L	L		
A	A	L	10/06/96
C	N	A	
E	E	P	RESULT
1	4	2	1:38.01
2	5	2	1:38.07
3	3	2	1:41.38
4	6	2	1:43.89
5	1	2	1:43.95
6	8	2	1:47.86
7	2	2	1:48.32
L7 manual			1:43.08
<i>A Ref</i>			

Digital Stopwatch Official Times:		
Place	Lane	Lane Times
1	4	1:37.91
2	5	1:37.95
3	3	1:41.29
4	7	1:43.08
5	6	1:43.69
6	1	1:43.84
7	8	1:47.77
8	2	1:48.17

The AOE has failed to record a time for Lane 7. The digital stopwatch time of 1:43.08 will be the official time. The Referee's decision is clearly indicated on the bottom of the slip and the Referee has signed the slip.

8.1.5 SAT or Digital Stopwatches as Primary

Figure 7 - Swimmers recording Equal Times

```
*****
168 – 200m – F17-18 FR – T 1
Results for finish
Start Time:      10:40:25.4704

Rk La           Time
 1 5           1:51.48
B-Up           (0.19)
B1:           1:51.67
B2:           1:51.70
B3:           1:51.67B
B3:           1:51.45

 2 2           1:51.57
B-Up           (0.14)
B1:           ---
B2:           1:51.73
B3:           1:51.70

 3 3           1:52.41
B-Up           (0.05)
B1:           1:52.46
B2:           1:52.44
B3:           1:52.50
B3:           1:52.46B

 4 4           1:53.92
B-Up           (0.11)
B1:           ---
B2:           1:54.06
B3:           1:54.00

 7           1:53.92
B-Up           (0.03)
B1:           1:53.95B
B2:           1:53.97
B3:           1:53.69

 6 6           1:56.35
B-Up           (0.11)
B1:           1:56.46
B2:           1:56.49
B3:           1:56.41
B3:           1:56.46B

 7 8           1:59.81
B-Up           (0.06)
B1:           1:59.87
B2:           1:48.05
B3:           1:48.02B
B3:           1:47.81

 8 1           2:03.03
B-Up           (0.12)
B1:           2:03.15
B2:           2:03.15B
B3:           2:03.18
B3:           2:03.13
```

SAT equipment or digital stopwatches reading to 1/100th of a second, may be used to establish official times if an AOE is not used. In such cases, Finish Judges need not be used to determine placings where there are three Timekeepers available for each lane.

No secondary or backup timing system need be used, except that reserve Timekeepers should be appointed where only digital stopwatches are being used and when SAT is used as the primary system. One (1) Timekeeper per lane should use a manual digital stopwatch to record the time in case of a malfunction of the SAT, in which case the manual stopwatch time becomes the official time.

FINA publications endorse the case of a Timekeeper operating a manual stopwatch in addition to pressing a SAT button and that if there is only one (1) stopwatch then that time is the official time.

If no AOE or SAT is being used and Finish Judges are used, the Finish Judges' and Timekeepers' decisions determine the result subject to the Referee's decision or delegation. If necessary, actual times are adjusted to fit the official places, as detailed in the Recorder Training Notes.

8.2. Equal Times

Times recorded as the same to 1/100th of a second, whether measured by AOE, SAT, or digital stopwatches, are equal times. Swimmers having equal times will also have equal places. **Figure 7** shows equal times recorded on the AOE and SAT and the way in which they would be marked by the AOE Supervisor or Operator. If the equal times are not marked by these Officials the Referee should do so.

The AOE shows the same place for lanes that have equal times and does not show the next place. In this example, lanes 4 and 7 are both shown as placing 4th (4 against Lane 4 and no number against Lane 7) and the next swimmer, lane 6, is shown as placing 6th.

The fact that the SAT times are not equal has no bearing on the outcome because there is no indication that the AOE has failed to work satisfactorily.

The AOE printout must be marked, either by the Referee or, under their delegation, by the AOE Supervisor/ CRS to indicate the equal times to the Chief Recorder.

Equal times in the same heat should be drawn to the Chief Recorder's attention by the AOE Operator or Supervisor marking the machine printout (see **Figure 7**).

When the AOE is networked with a computer that is recording results (i.e. in the Meet Manager program), equal times are automatically noted by the program. However, the AOE Operator or CRS must still check and annotate the AOE printout as part of the declaration of the result of the race ([Rule SW2](#)). This is used by the Recorders to check the computer compilations.

8.3. Determination of Official Places

The relative order of swimmers in a race and in an event i.e. the official places, is determined by the comparison of official times ([SW13](#)). When there is any apparent contradiction between times and places, the Referee must make a decision on the official time and, therefore, the placings in each case and record it. The task of checking times against places is the Recorders' duty and this liaison will have been discussed by the Referee in the pre-meet briefing with the Chief Recorder.

8.3.1 No AOE Time - SAT or Digital Stopwatches used as Backup

Where no AOE place or time is registered, the Referee, or the person so delegated, inserts the official time from the backup system i.e. SAT or digital stopwatches, for each missed lane to establish the relative order for that race. It is important to note that places are determined from official times only and the placings given by the backup system, SAT or digital stopwatches, have no bearing.

When using AOE and SAT and the systems are not networked, the Referee or their delegated appointee, must clearly communicate any decision made on placings to the Chief Recorder on the AOE printout. This is done by using an arrow with the lane number to indicate the official place of the lane in question. **Figure 8** illustrates this. It is not enough to write on the printout, for example, "L5 manual" or "L5 SAT" without the indication of the place and the official time.

Figure 8 - Insertion of SAT Placing OSM 6 Printout

OMEGA SWIM-O-MATIC OSM 6			
ARMING:			15 SEC
LAPS :			02
PROG :			AUTO
EVENT :	038	HEAT :	03
READY FOR NEW RACE			
EVENT		038	HEAT : 03
P			09.34:27.85
L	L		
A	A	L	10/06/96
C	N	A	
E	E	P	RESULT
1	4	2	1:38.01
2	5	2	1:38.07
3	3	2	1:41.38
4	7	2	1:43.23
5	1	2	1:43.95
6	8	2	1:47.86
7	2	2	1:48.32
<i>A Ref</i>			
L6 Manual 1:43.98			

OMEGA SWIM-O-MATIC OSM 6			
ARMING:			15 SEC
LAPS :			01
PROG :			MANUAL
EVENT :	038	HEAT :	03
READY FOR NEW RACE			
EVENT		038	HEAT : 03
P			09.34:27.85
L	L		
A	A	L	10/06/96
C	N	A	
E	E	P	RESULT
1	4	1	1:38.11
2	5	1	1:38.16
3	3	1	1:41.49
4	7	1	1:43.38
5	6	1	1:43.98
6	1	1	1:44.06
7	8	1	1:47.99
8	2	1	1:48.47

In **Figure 8** the Lane 6 official manual time would be inserted between Lanes 1 and 8 (i.e. in 6th place) because that is where the time fits, even though in the order of the manual times, Lane 6 is fifth.

If either SAT or digital stopwatches are the backup system and no AOE times were recorded for a race, then the official times for those swimmers are the SAT times for that race or the official manual times determined by Recorders in accordance with the Rules. Those official times are compared with official (AOE) times of other heats in order to determine the relative order of finish for the event.

Figure 9 - Insertion of Digital Watch Placing OSM 6 Printout

```

ARMING:          15 SEC
LAPS      :      02
PROG      :      AUTO
EVENT     :      038 HEAT : 08

READY FOR NEW RACE

EVENT:         038 HEAT : 08

P             09.12:10.46
L  L
A  A  L      10/06/96
C  N  A
E  E  P      RESULT

1  4  2      1:38.01
2  5  2      1:38.07
3  3  2      1:41.38
4  7  2      1:43.23
5  6  2      1:43.89
6  8  2      1:47.86
7  2  2      1:48.32

L1 Manual 1:43.74      A Ref
  
```

Digital Stopwatch Official Times:

Place	Lane	Lane Times
1	4	1:37.91
2	5	1:37.95
3	3	1:41.29
4	7	1:43.08
5	6	1:43.69
6	1	1:43.74
7	8	1:47.77
8	2	1:48.17

The AOE has failed to record a time for Lane 1. The digital stopwatch time of 1:43.74 will be the official time and L1 would be placed 5th i.e., between L7 and L6.

L1 Manual 1:43.74 *A Ref* ← Referee's notation and signature

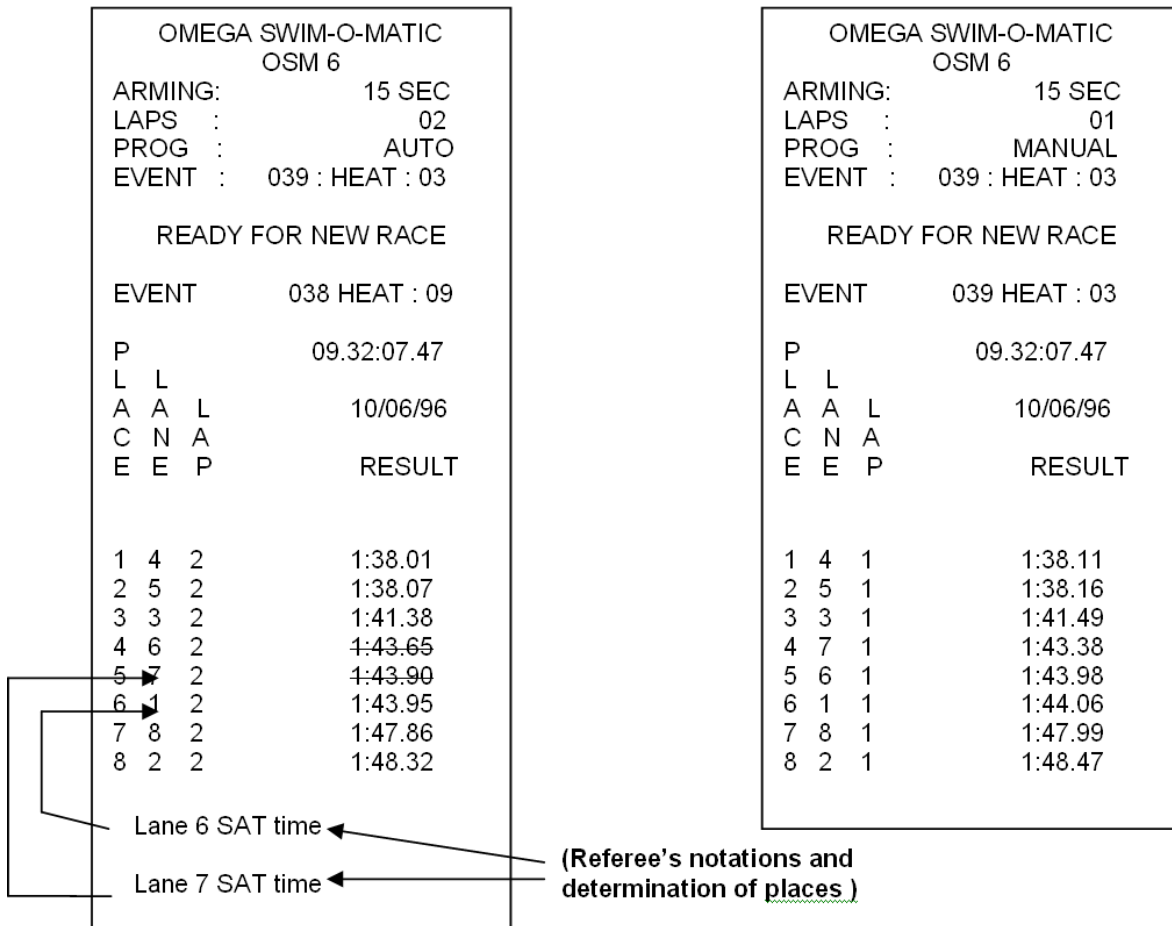
8.3.2 AOE Time Incorrect - SAT or Digital Stopwatches as Backup

Where there is evidence that there has been a failure of the AOE to correctly record the time for one or more lanes, the official time obtained from the backup (SAT or digital stopwatches) is used in lieu of the incorrect AOE time.

Figure 10 illustrates a case where there is evidence that the AOE has failed to record the correct time for two of the lanes and the Referee has decided to take the SAT time as the official time for those lanes. In these circumstances the Referee must indicate the places for those lanes on the AOE slip. This is done by marking the AOE slip with an arrow indicating the place for the relevant lanes, as shown in this example. The Referee may elect to delegate this responsibility to the CRS / AOE Supervisor who can have SAT backup times inserted directly into the result, though the Referee remains responsible for any decisions made.

Placings the Referee has taken may provide evidence of the possibility of any soft touches or failure of a swimmer to activate the touch pad which the Referee may suspect or which the Chief Recorder brings to the Referee's attention after comparison of the AOE against the backup timing results. The Referee's results however cannot be used to override placings determined from official times in accordance with the Rules.

**Figure 10 - Insertion of Placing - AOE Failure
OSM 6 Printout**



8.3.3 Fully manual

When using fewer than three (3) Timekeepers per lane with Finish Judges, the Referee must also determine the official placings when the Finish Judges' decision and manual stopwatch times do not agree ([Rules SW2 and SW13](#)). Official times are the times adjusted to agree with official placings.

8.3.4 Equal places

All swimmers who have recorded the same official time, to 1/100th of a second, whether by electronic or manual timing, shall be given the same or equal place ([Rule SW11](#)). The term equal times should be used and not dead heat. **Figure 7** shows equal times recorded on the AOE and SAT.

If the AOE records the order of touch and time, the relative order of swimmers having AOE times or places cannot be altered ([SW13](#)). Swimmers from different heats with the same time are recorded as equal times and are accorded equal placings.

Note that in the event of equal placings in a final, whether an A, a B or a timed final:

- The next place in order is not recorded for awards; e.g. if two swimmers are placed equal 2nd, there is no 3rd place awarded and the next place is 4th.
- Each swimmer with equal placing receives equal points for that placing, but the next one or more respective places is deleted accordingly ([see GR12](#)), e.g., for the above example, both receive 2nd place points for equal 2nd placing and no 3rd place points are awarded.
- Should swimmers in a final or swimmers from different heats in a timed final have equal times, the Announcer will announce the result as, for example, "Equal 2nd place". The swimmers concerned in equal places in an event jointly hold the title if they are the winners and if the promoting body consents, shall divide the prize money involved or shall re-swim the event within seven (7) days at a time and place as the promoting body may direct ([Rule SW11](#)).

8.3.5 Official Result for Disqualified Swimmer

If a swimmer is disqualified during or following an event, such disqualification should be recorded in the official results but no time or place shall be recorded or announced ([Rule SW11](#)).

8.3.6 Recorders' Role

Recorders must check SAT times against the AOE times in the same way that they must check manual times against Finish Judges' collated places when no AOE or SAT is in use.

If not already noted by the Referee, the CRS, AOE Operator or the Chief Recorder must let the Referee know of any discrepancies greater than 0.3 seconds between AOE and backup times for any lane, as this may indicate a failure of a swimmer to activate a touch pad. The Referee will probably already be aware of AOE/SAT discrepancies but AOE/manual digital stopwatch discrepancies will not be apparent until these times are compared by the Recorders.

- Timekeepers may have noticed and recorded a soft touch which will provide confirmatory evidence for the Referee, possibly backed by the Referee's places.

When a time contradicts the official place determined by Finish Judges, the CRS/Chief Recorder must draw the matter to the Referee's attention in accordance with [Rule SW2](#). Conflicting times are adjusted in accordance with [Rule SW11 \(see Recorders' Training Notes\)](#).

Recorders calculate the official time when there has been an equipment malfunction. Recorders cannot alter an AOE time or place. The Referee alone has the authority to adjust AOE times under the particular circumstances covered by the Rules:

- After the Referee's decision, the official time will be advised to the Recorders operating the computer(s) if in use, so that the correct result is published.

Recorders have responsibilities relating to the claiming of records which are detailed in the Recorders' Training Notes. In the event of failure of AOE, having informed the Referee, Recorders also check to ensure that three stopwatches or three SAT buttons recorded the time and obtain the signatures of the Timekeepers involved on the Record Application Form.

The Referee may direct the Chief Recorder, during the pre-meet briefing, to periodically provide the Chief Timekeeper with copies of AOE and SAT listings (including the times recorded for each Timekeeper's button) of full heats of particular races for distribution to Timekeepers for their interest and information.

8.3.7 Breakdown of Equipment

In the event that a breakdown of the AOE occurs, or it is clearly indicated that there has been a failure of the equipment, or that a swimmer has failed to activate the equipment, then the decisions of the SAT or the recordings of the Timekeepers, as adjusted for the decisions of the Finish Judges where appropriate, shall be the official times ([Rule SW11](#)).

8.3.8 Referee and Finish Judges' Result

The Finish Judges have a duty to come to a decision and the Referee's place(s) may be required in order to clarify places within an area of disagreement amongst the Finish Judges ([Rule SW2](#)).

The rule is quite specific regarding the area where the Referee's places are able to be used in determining the result. The Referee cannot influence the Finish Judges or impose their result of a finish on the majority of Finish Judges. However, the Referee can draw to their attention particulars that may cause them to reconsider their decision.

- For example, the Finish Judges fail to place lane 1 in a major place but relegate lane 1 to a minor place. Apart from the Referee's places, evidence could be supported by the times recorded. The Rules provide for these and similar situations.

In the normal course of events, the decision of the Finish Judges has precedence over manual times (see [Rule SW13](#)). The Referee has authority, and a duty, to make a decision and determine official places when the times recorded do not agree with the decision of the Finish Judges.

The Referee can make a decision only when the Finish Judges places and the times recorded do not agree ([Rule SW2](#)).

- When a close race results in a split decision the Referee does not have authority to overrule the Finish Judges or their collation.
- The Finish Judges' placings, determined in accordance with the Rules, is a decision of fact and [Rule GR23](#) applies in regard to any protest.

8.3.9 Swim-Offs

When swimmers from the same or different heats have equal times registered to 1/100th of a second for the 8th or 16th places in an eight lane pool, or for 10th or 20th place in a ten lane pool, there shall be swim-off to determine which swimmer will advance to the semi-finals and finals respectively, except when all the swimmers involved agree to determine advancement by a draw ([Rule SW3](#)).

- When AOE is used:
 - All swimmers who have recorded the same time to 1/100th of a second shall be accorded the same and equal places ([SW11](#)). Hence all swimmers, whether from the same or different heats, recording the same time will be involved in the swim-off.
- When AOE is not used:
 - If the swimmers with equal times came from the same or different heats then a swim-off, or draw, in accordance with [Rule SW3](#) will apply
 - If the swimmers with equal times, either adjusted or determined from the SAT, come from a race in which the Referee has determined the places in a heat (under [Rule SW2](#)) then the Referee's places shall apply i.e. judged placings shall apply, so no swim-off shall occur, unless their adjudication is equal places.

FINA use the word "registered" in the context of the official register of results. The principle is that all swimmers with the same official time, regardless of places, are entitled to compete in any swim-off. The swim-off must take place after all involved swimmers have completed their heats at a time agreed between the Referee and the parties involved ([Rule SW3](#)).

- The Referee and the Chief Recorder need to be alert to this situation occurring in the heats of the last few races in each session of a heated finals competition such as NSW Championships so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Either AOE or Finish Judges' places only are required from the swim-off to determine who advances to the final. The times recorded in the swim-off do not disturb the relative order of other qualifiers in the event. However, times (AOE or manual) should be taken, as they can be used for the purposes of a qualifying time and a record can be established by any swimmer contesting the swim-off.

8.3.10 Qualifiers for Finals

The discussion in the preceding section covers the Referee's involvement in the preparation for finals. The Recorders ([Rule SW3](#)) are responsible for drawing up the finalist's sheets for 'A' and 'B' finals or semi-finals. The computer program does this, applying the relevant parts of this Rule according to the conditions of the competition. However, Recorders must always check the printout before it is used or distributed.

Qualifiers can withdraw from a final up to the time nominated by the Promoting Body. For State Championships this is 30 minutes after the posting of the result of the event. Generally, in State Championships, when a swimmer withdraws or is promoted from a 'B' final, no substitute is brought into the 'B' final, although this can vary at the Meet Director's discretion. This is different at Australian Championships.

9. Protests and Juries of Appeal

Protests and Juries of Appeal are described in [GR23](#).

Protests are part of the Rules of Swimming. The capacity for a Manager/coach/swimmer to lodge a protest against a disqualification, being excluded from a competition, or other matters that arise from time to time, is part and parcel of a democratic competition.

Referees must never make a decision thinking that the outcome could lead to a protest or, worse, not make a decision because they consider that it could lead to a protest.

Referees must not apply their interpretations to the Rules. Rules must be applied as they are written and intended. Referees must be consistent in their application of the Rules and must not attempt to do a favour by bending the rules.

Where Referees do this, they should not have any concerns about having a decision being overturned by a Jury of Appeal.

9.1. When Can Someone Protest

Protests are possible:

- If the Rules and regulations for the conduct of the competition are not observed
- If other conditions endanger the competition and / or swimmers
- Against a decision of the Referee. However, no protests shall be allowed against a decision of fact.

9.1.1. A Decision of Fact

Fact - A truth verifiable by experience or observation, realities of a situation. A thing that is known to be true.

Truth - A proven or verifiable fact. A true statement of account or belief.

A decision of fact can be defined as an observation by an experienced, knowledgeable person who believes that what they have seen is a true and real situation.

[Rule GR23](#) states that "... no protests shall be allowed against decisions of fact" but this does not mean that a protest cannot be lodged against an infraction that the Referee may consider to be a decision of fact.

It is the Jury of Appeal which has the final decision to determine if an infraction is truly a decision of fact.

9.2. Who Can Protest, and How Can they Protest

Protests must be submitted;

- To the Referee
- In writing
- By the responsible team leader, swimmer or a representative on behalf of the swimmer
- Together with a deposit of AU\$100.00
- Within thirty (30) minutes following the conclusion of the respective event.

SNSW has a Protest form however, Referees should accept all written protests, whether on the SNSW Protest form or not.

If a coach or swimmer asks a question as to why the disqualification occurred, the Referee should give a reason/explanation ensuring that they do not argue or keep explaining on pool deck. Referees should advise the coach/competitor that it is their decision and advise them that they have the right to protest if they do not wish to accept the Referee's explanation. Referees should advise the Rules and method of lodging a protest.

9.3. Lodgement Time Limits

If conditions causing a potential protest are known before the competition, the protest must be lodged prior to the Starter's signal being given. For example, a swimmer's eligibility to compete in an event.

For matters relating to a particular event, protests must be lodged within 30 minutes following the conclusion of the respective event. For example, a disqualification arising from a Rule infraction.

It is for this reason that Referees should note on their program the time that any disqualifications are announced, and the Announcer should also note on the Rule Infraction Report the time when the announcement is made. The Referee should instruct the Chief Recorder to ensure that the time of posting appears on the result sheet. This may occur automatically when the result is printed or posted to Live Results.

9.4. Acceptance

If a protest may be pending, Referees should notify the CRS/Chief Recorder and advise them to hold up producing the results as it may impact on the finalists or medal winners. The Meet Management should also be advised as they may have to convene a Jury of Appeal.

If the general requirements of form and time for lodgement are met, the protest must be accepted.

This applies even where a Referee believes the protest may concern a decision of fact which the Rules say shall not be allowed. Such a protest has to be accepted and investigated to determine whether or not it is indeed a protest against a decision of fact.

The only exception is when the Referee can clearly establish that the conditions causing the protest were known, by the protestor, before the signal to start was given and the protest is not presented until after the event has been swum.

- For example, a swimmer's qualification to compete in an individual event should be noted before a competition when the program discloses relevant Rules, regulations and event entries. The Referee would question the protestor along these lines.

If a situation is only noticed immediately before the start or as the signal to start is given, in fairness, the Referee should consider accepting the protest if it was not reasonable to expect strict compliance with the Rule due to the short period of time between the notice and the signal to start.

9.5. Action on Acceptance

On acceptance of a protest, provided it does not affect the next race about to be swum, the Referee should hand over control to the co-Referee or appoint a Judge of Strokes as Referee while the protest is considered.

The Referee should keep a time record of their actions.

If the protest concerns the next race, the Referee should endeavour to resolve the matter before starting the event. If this is not possible, the swimmers must be advised prior to the event that the event is to be conducted 'under protest', without indicating the nature of the protest or the swimmer involved. The swimmers should also be informed that the event result will not be announced and awards will not be made until the protest is settled.

The Referee should notify the Meet Director that a protest has been submitted, particularly if the presentation of awards could be delayed until the protest is resolved.

9.6. Consideration

All protests must be considered by the Referee. The Referee is required to adjudicate on all protests and, if rejecting the protest, state the reasons for the decision.

The principles of natural justice oblige the Referee to consider whatever information is at their disposal in order to assist their consideration and to arrive at a proper and just decision. Referees are authorised to use all means available to ensure that the decision given is a fair one.

- For example, if the protest concerned a disqualification, reviewing the infraction report(s) and, perhaps, re-verifying facts with the reporting Official(s) and viewing video evidence provided by the protestor. It is important that any infraction is expressed in terms of the Rules so that the facts are clear and misapplication of the Rules is avoided.

Protests are not allowed against decisions of fact, and such protests would be rejected after due consideration. But the facts have to be correctly founded on the Rules and not be a misapplication of the Rules.

- For example, a fair start, misconduct at the start, unfair swimming, obstruction or interference that the Referee or an authorised official observed would be decisions of fact. Note that rejection of a protest on such grounds does not affect the protestor's right of appeal.

The accidental omission by an Official to carry out their duties does not prevent an event being properly conducted and is no ground for a protest unless the omission has prejudiced the chances of any swimmer in a material way.

While the Rules require the Referee to consider all protests, in practice, matters not related to decisions of fact concerning the swimming competition, may need to be referred to the Meet Management in order that the facts can be determined before a decision can be made.

- For example, eligibility to compete would require examination of the Promoting Body's records. A protest about the conditions applying to the meet would be the province of the Promoting Body.

The decision to accept or reject any protest rests with the Referee, notwithstanding any assistance the Referee may seek in the course of their consideration.

- Referees should carefully consider the reasons why a protest was made
- Referees may consider upon reflection, that there is a genuine reason raised in the protest that the Referee did not consider in the original decision
- Referees may consider upon reflection, that a better decision could have been made
- A Referee should not be afraid to admit that an error of judgment could have been made originally.

Referees should take the opportunity to correct any error of judgement.

If a Referee rejects a protest, they must give the reasons why and advise the coach/competitor that they have the right to appeal the decision to a Jury of Appeal. The Referee should advise the Meet Management that there is a likely to be a request for a Jury of Appeal and give them all documentation.

9.7. Communication

The Referee must communicate their decision regarding the protest to all the parties concerned.

If the Referee upholds the protest, the deposit is returned. If the protest is rejected, the deposit is forfeited to the Promoting Body/SNSW. An official receipt should be issued by the Meet Director.

The protest documentation and a copy of the decision and reasons, as provided to the protestor, should be immediately provided to the Meet Management.

- The Referee's Report provided to SNSW or the Promoting Body after the meet should detail all protests upheld, as well as those rejected.

9.8. Jury of Appeal

On dismissal of a protest, the team leader or the swimmer can appeal against the dismissal to the Jury of Appeal whose decision shall be final.

The organisers of the meet appoint the Jury of Appeal. It should consist of three people, all of whom have knowledge of the Rules of Swimming. It must be conducted under the terms of Natural Justice which is basically that the appeal is conducted as an informal hearing. It is important to note that, if the protestor is a minor, they must be accompanied by an adult. If a parent or guardian is not available, then a suitable adult such as the swimmer's coach or team manager would be satisfactory.

A Chairman is appointed to conduct a Jury of Appeal. Guidelines for conducting a Jury are:

- The Chairman of the Jury is advised by the Meet Management of an appeal and is handed all documentation. That would include the Infraction Report, the letter of protest from the coach and any written response made by the Referee
- The jury convenes and reads all the documents
- They should consider if there are any grounds for an appeal. If not, they should advise the protestor and dismiss the appeal
- If they consider that there are grounds, or if they want more information, they should call the protestor, their team leader and the Officials involved into the Jury Room at separate times and make their decision based on the information they have gathered from each source and any other available evidence, i.e. video evidence.
- The jury should check that the protestor is aware of the relevant Rules and that there is no misunderstanding regarding the Referee's decision to dismiss the protest
- The reporting Official should be asked to explain the infraction as they observed it
- The protestor or the team leader are allowed to ask questions of the Jury if clarification is required
 - Although the protestor or the team leader can ask questions of the Jury, cross examination is not allowed. By way of explanation, direct examination is a series of open-ended questions for the purpose of testimony. By contrast, cross-examination questions are very pointed, specific questions which suggest either a yes or no answer.
- If necessary, the Referee can be asked to explain the reason for the dismissal of the protest in the first place

- The Chairman of the Jury should ask each of the parties whether they have anything else they would like to add and whether they feel that they have had a fair hearing
- The Jury should consider the matter in accordance with the Rules and give their decision in writing, with an explanation for the decision
- The Referee and the protestor must be advised, in writing, of the decision and the Referee should pass on the information to the Chief Recorder who would take any necessary actions in regard to the results.

The Referee must attend to all subsequent matters that might flow from the Jury of Appeal's decision and should be given a copy of the Jury's decision immediately and before the other parties.

If a protest cannot be resolved by the Jury of Appeal during the meet or meet series, if applicable, the matter must be referred to the Board for decision. The Referee, who must uphold all the Rules of Swimming, should ensure that this action will be taken by the Meet Management on behalf of the Promoting Body.

10. Records

[SW12](#) describes the applicable Rules for Records. These Rules should be read in conjunction with the [Recorder Training Notes](#) and [GR18](#).

A record is the establishment of a performance which equals or eclipses the previous best on record. Records can be established in scratch events for individual record attempts swum in freshwater pools of not less than 50m for long course records and not less than 25m for short course records.

- The first swimmer in a relay team can also establish an individual record, provided all the rules relevant to the event and the establishment of a record have been observed. Any subsequent disqualification of the relay team does not nullify the record.
- A swimmer in an individual event can apply for a record at an intermediate distance if the swimmer, coach or manager specifically asks the Referee to have the performance especially timed or if the time at the intermediate distance is recorded by approved AOE equipment.
 - For the intermediate time to be recognised as a record, the swimmer must then complete the scheduled distance of the event, achieve the event qualifying time and not be disqualified.

If AOE is used, Recorders should check for records at intermediate distances as a matter of course. Recorders are responsible for checking and listing all new records established.

10.1. Record attempt

[SW12](#) states the conditions and minimum number of appointed or approved Officials required for an individual attempt on a record.

Swimming Australia Rules allow an individual race against time or record attempt on an Australian record to be held at a swim meet conducted by, or under the control of, a State Association and sanctioned by the Meet Referee on the day.

For a State Record to be recognised, AOE, SAT or three stopwatches accurate to 1/100th of a second must record the time. To be accepted for record purposes, each timing device must be operated by approved Officials, started at the starting signal of the race, and not stopped until the instant any part of the swimmer's body contacts the finish wall.

As each Timekeeper may operate only one stopwatch or one SAT button, it is necessary, when not using AOE, to have three Timekeepers on each lane, operating either SAT buttons or stopwatches to enable records to be claimed.

10.2. Application for Record

Referees should always carry Application for Record forms with them. See [Appendix 11](#) below.

When State Championships or meets are directly controlled by the Governing Body (SNSW) and, provided the official results have been produced and certified by the CRS/Chief Recorder, Application for Record forms are not required for each new record.

At other approved meets, whether timed by AOE or manually, Application for Record forms must be properly completed and signed when a swimmer's performance equals or improves on the previous best on record:

- When the time was recorded by AOE, the form is to be signed by the AOE Operator and the Official who checked the machine time (usually the CRS/AOE Supervisor)
- Where the race was timed manually, the form is to be signed by the three (3) Timekeepers on that particular lane and the Official who actually checked the stopwatches (usually the Chief Timekeeper)
- The Referee on behalf of the swimmer, and stating that the Rules and regulations have been observed.

The Referee must ensure all these Officials sign the Application for Record form before they leave the pool on the day of the competition.

- When it is returned to the SNSW Office, the Application for Record form will also be signed by the Chief Executive Officer of SNSW.

Whilst the application is being formally made by the swimmer, in accordance with the Rules, the swimmer relies on the Meet Director or Promoting Body for lodgement of the completed application form with SNSW. Before leaving the pool, the Referee should ascertain who is accepting responsibility for lodging the application in good time.

Areas are responsible for sending official results of approved meets to SNSW administration within seven (7) days of the meet for qualifying swims to be recognised for Championship purposes. In practice, the Promoting Body may attend to this. Each Area will have its own protocol concerning this Rule.

11. Summary

Technical Officials don't just get a Referee (Level 1) credential - they become a Referee. It is a significant achievement. Competent Referees are the future of the sport and help provide the best competitive opportunity for all swimmers on an equal basis.

Referees are also central to the SAL system of educating and encouraging parents and former swimmers to become qualified as Technical Officials and share the workload at swim meets, be it at Club nights, Inter-Club competition, Area, State, National or higher level Championships.

The following list summarises key matters for Referees at State Championships. It emphasises points made in these Training Notes.

- Be punctual
- Dress correctly as notified in the appointments notice
- Ensure that you are up to date concerning the Rules
- Check all facilities and equipment personally
- On arrival, meet with the Pool Manager and Meet Director
- Ask the Meet Director about matters which impact on the competition
- Locate Officials' programs and finalists' sheets
- Check presentation arrangements and awards, presence of dignitaries
- If not provided with a scheduled run time, time the meet and mark your program accordingly
- Give directions to, and discuss with, each Chief Official your requirements for the meet and check specific responsibilities are known. They will, in turn, pass on your instructions as Officials report
- Personally brief any group of Officials considered necessary
- Ensure all Officials (including Runners) sign the attendance schedule
- Delegate specifically responsibilities which require to be delegated
- Ensure Officials test their equipment well before the advertised starting time (touchpad, AOE and computer linkages are critical)
- Conduct watch check (manual or SAT)
- Introduce Runners to the Officials with whom they shall have direct contact
- Involve the Meet Director in briefing of appropriate Officials, e.g. Announcer
- Ensure the competition starts on time
- Observe swimmers during the competition
- Check timing during competition against your run time schedule
- Take immediate action to avoid undue delays
- Ensure each swimmer is advised of any disqualification
- Do not delay the meet to deal with matters requiring your decision. If necessary, appoint a Judge of Strokes to referee in your place (or your co-Referee) and deal with the matter (appoint an Inspector of Turns to replace the Judge of Strokes)
- Before the end of the session, personally thank all Officials
- Prepare your report and deliver to the State Technical Swimming Committee.

Appendix 1: Referee Assessment Criteria

[Referee Assessment Criteria](#)

Appendix 2: Checklist for Briefing Officials

2.1 Chief Recorder

In conjunction with the Control Room Supervisor (CRS), ensure the Chief Recorder has been introduced to the Clerks of Course (Marshals), Check Starters and Runners.

Discuss with the CRS and/or Chief Recorder and agree on arrangements for:

- Workflow, timing and liaison with relevant Officials
- Precision in check and recheck procedures, particularly for withdrawals and results
- Checking all equipment and stationery is available
- Ensuring that there is adequate staffing to undertake all facets of result processing
- Official declaration and posting of results
- Notification of disqualifications (to computer operators and announcer)
- Presentation timing and protocol (particularly liaison with Announcer and Presentation Officer).

Discuss with and ensure the Chief Recorder is aware of:

- Reporting immediately any anomaly on entries
- The seeding system applicable to the meet and any visiting swimmers
- Requirements for amalgamations and distribution of revised start lists
- The Referee being informed of discrepancies between times and/or places (whether using AOE with or without SAT or manual judging and timing)
- How to report other matters that may require your decision including documentation (e.g. swim-offs, lodgement of relay team composition etc.).

Where manual timing is used, ensure the Chief Recorder is aware of:

- Requirements concerning notification of discrepancies between places and times when a fully manual competition, or between manual stopwatch and AOE or SAT times, where manual watches are used as the backup timing system
- To have heat seeding completed for the initial events to be able to start on the advertised starting time
- The impact of delays in processing withdrawals and any subsequent seeding and/or amalgamations, as the situation applies
- Advising the Referee of any need for amalgamations or reseeds to allow the Referee to make decisions in adequate time prior to an event to avoid delays.

2.2 Announcers

Check with the Announcer and the Meet Director for the Announcer:

- Making announcements only on the authority of the Technical Manager, Meet Director or the Referee for matters within their respective jurisdictions
- Timing of event and heat announcements and special announcements
- Announcing events and heats
- Liaison with Check Starters and/or Clerks of Course (Marshalls) in conjunction with any Claims Board should this be in use
- Calling for quiet at the start of a race only on the Referee's request
- Not calling or pre-empting places in a race
- Not making announcements after Referee's whistle at the start until the race is in progress
- Introducing swimmers, presenting finalists and announcing results
- The procedure for announcement of breaks, delays or other matters within the Meet Management's jurisdiction.

2.3 AOE and SAT Operators

In conjunction with the CRS, check with AOE and SAT Operators for:

- Pre-competition check and set up of equipment, touch pads and SAT buttons
- Ensuring enough printer paper
- Noting own programs with missing swimmers and disqualifications
- Resetting equipment promptly after each race and checking that AOE and SAT are both set to correct event and heat number
- Appropriate mark-up of timing slip printouts
- Observing the finishes to detect any apparent failures by swimmers to activate the equipment or Officials to operate SAT buttons (if in a position to do so)
- Reporting equipment failures to the CRS or Referee
- Ensuring printouts requiring a Referee's decision are handed personally to the CRS or Referee (or Runner for Referee) and, confidentiality of results until official placings have been determined
- Equipment interfaces, including communications tests before start of competition
- Liaison between the various officials operating the various components of the timing and recording systems including:
 - AOE and SAT operators
 - Computer recorder(s)/operator(s)
 - Starter
- Interaction with the CRS and Referee on the completion of a race before the result is declared e.g. disqualifications, relay take off infractions and approval of results
- Operation of the scoreboard.

2.4 Judges of Strokes

Ensure each Judge of Strokes is aware:

- To report infractions immediately, directly to the Referee and using the wording of the Rules
- Where to stand for the start of the various events
- When to sit for longer distance freestyle events
- Of lanes to be supervised
- Of turns and finishing touches in form strokes
- How they are to indicate, report and record all rule infractions
- Of observing turns to assist Inspectors of Turns
- Of any recent alterations to the Rules or meet requirements and their application
- That no signals are to be used to indicate rule infractions. Movement from a set position can indicate to the Referee that a report is coming
- Check that they have a whistle - especially Judges of Strokes 1 and 2.

2.5 Check Starters and Clerks of Course

Ensure Check Starters and Clerks of Course (Marshalls) are aware:

- Of the Marshalling procedures to be used for the Meet
- Where appropriate, of any operation of a Claims Board (Claims Boards are no longer used at State Meets)
- That athletes are given every chance to swim
- Of check and recheck procedure
- As appropriate, to close off events promptly
- Where appropriate, ensure that the Technical Manager, Referee and the CRS/Chief Recorder are advised in a timely manner of opportunities to amalgamate and/or reseed
- Of the latest swimsuit Rules and regulations and to check that swimsuits comply with the Rules
- Of the latest Rules and regulations governing advertising on swimsuits, apparel and pool deck equipment and to check that swimsuits, apparel and pool deck equipment comply with the Rules
- Of control over swimmers
- About timely performance of respective tasks
- Of where the Check Starters are to stand to indicate to the Referee that all swimmers are in place, ready for the start
- When to bring athletes to the Referee
- Of maintaining an appropriate working relationship with the athletes.

2.6 Starter

Discuss with and ensure the Starter is aware of:

- Where you will stand
- How you will hand over control of swimmers at the start
- About the recall signal for stopping the race
- How to recommend a disqualification at the start
- To check placement of starting stand and operation of equipment and sound levels of the Starter's microphone
- To verify that false start ropes are in position and functional and are aware of the procedure for operating these
- To participate in watch check and/or check of AOE equipment
- About event announcement and talking to swimmers
- Any special instructions for swimmers.

2.7 Inspectors of Turns

The Referee may choose to brief the Chiefs in detail and address generic points during the general briefing. Ensure each Inspector of Turns is aware:

- To work through their Chiefs
- To use appropriate body language (e.g. looking at the Chief) to report an infraction
- The Chief IOT must ensure that all lanes are observed by an IOT or Reserve IOT at all times
- To immediately report infractions to the Referee
- That no signals are to be used to indicate rule infractions. The Chief Inspector of Turns movement from a set position can indicate to the Referee that a report is coming
- The Chief Inspector of Turns should radio through to the Referee that a report is coming
- Of lanes to be supervised
- Of their area of jurisdiction
- Whether lap counters will be used
- Whether whistles will be required
- How they are to report and record all turning and relay take off Rule infractions that they observe
- Of their role in installing, adjusting and removing backstroke ledges when used
- Of any recent alterations to the Rules or meet requirements and their application.

2.8 Presentation Officers

Where these are used, check with the Presentation Officers that Meet Management has briefed them, particularly regarding obtaining official places from the Referee only.

2.9 Timekeepers

Ensure the Timekeepers are briefed by the Chief Timekeeper:

- About method of operating timing equipment (AOE/SAT)
- When to move forward to take the time
- To record a possible light touch by a swimmer on a timing pad or any other indication they may have of a malfunction of the AOE/SAT equipment but not at the expense of taking the time of swimmers in their lanes
- When to resume their seat.

Where manual timing is used these additional instructions will be needed:

- When to start their watch
- How to take the time
- The signal to clear their watch
- The requirement to record their times on their own programs as well as lane time sheets or cards
- How to report apparent equipment failure or malfunction and to whom
- Additionally, to ensure that a timing check is conducted where manual watches are used according to [Rule SW2](#).

2.10 Runners

Ensure the Runner(s) is/are aware of:

- Their key role in moving information between Officials and the need for speed and accuracy
- Where to stand
- Information to be collected (location) and delivered
- Location of key Officials

Additionally, where full manual timing is in use

- To collect cards quickly, immediately after the finish of the race
- To verify the correct cards have been collected
- Not to obstruct the Timekeepers at the start or finish of any race
- To collect Finish Judges' result sheets
- Where to deliver cards and Finish Judges' slips.

Appendix 3: Referee's Report

[Referee's Report](#)

Appendix 4: Using Radio Headsets at a Swim Meet

The proper use of Radio Headsets at a swimming competition can increase the efficiency of the meet.

Radio Protocols

4.1 Allocation of Radio Headsets

Where possible and if appropriate, the following Officials should be provided with a Radio Headset:

- Referee, one for each Referee appointed to the session
- Chief Inspector of Turns, at each end
- CRS/AOE Supervisor
- Chief Recorder, if no CRS
- Marshals, one at each table
- Announcer

4.2. Radio Protocols

Protocols for use of Radio Headsets are fully detailed in the [SNSW Radio Etiquette Protocols](#) document available on the SNSW website.

A summary of Radio Protocols, however, would include:

- No idle chatter
- Allow a second after pressing the “speak” button before commencing to speak
- Identify the speaker first and then the intended recipient
- Speak clearly
- Be succinct
- Release the “speak” button when finished speaking

4.3. Uses During the Meet

Radio Headsets provide the opportunity to save time by allowing Officials in different parts of the pool environment to communicate quickly and easily without the need to be in physical contact. Examples of opportunities to use Radio Headsets include:

- Referees informing the CRS/AOE Supervisor and Chief Recorder of a disqualification
- Chief Inspectors of Turns alerting the Referee to a possible Rule infraction reported by an Inspector of Turns
- Chief Inspectors of Turns alerting the Referee to Judge of Strokes 3 or 4 coming over to report a Rule infraction
- Marshals consulting with the Referee regarding a possible amalgamation/re-seed with the Referee able to inform the Chief Recorder to proceed with this action.

Appendix 5: Multi-Class Swimmers

Accredited Referees can apply for assessment for the SWD (Swimmers with Disability) Extension to their Referee Accreditation. Regardless of whether a Referee takes this option, they may be required to referee a race where Multi-Class swimmers are competing. This could be an individual swimmer competing in a race against able-bodied swimmers, or it could be in a Multi-Class race scheduled as an integral part of the meet program. Therefore, all Referees must have an understanding of the [Multi-Class Swimming Rules](#) and of refereeing Multi-Class Swimmers.

Multi-Class swimmers are classified according to their individual impairment. This process is carried out by trained and accredited Classifiers and requires medical evidence, as well as direct observation of the swimmer, both in the water and on land.

Each swimmer, on being classified, will receive a Classification Card, an example of which is shown below.



Depending on their impairment a swimmer may be placed into any of 16 classes:

- S1 - S10 Swimmers with functional impairment that restricts their ability to fully use their body. This could be the result of a congenital condition or of an accident. S10 swimmers have the least degree of impairment of movement with S1 swimmers the most impaired.
- S11 - S13 Swimmers with vision impairment. S13 swimmers have the least degree of impairment while S11 swimmers are the most impaired.
- S14 Swimmers with intellectual impairment.
- S15 Swimmers with hearing impairment.
- S16 Swimmers who have been the recipients of an organ transplant.

Each swimmer with a functional impairment may receive three classifications, indicated on their Classification Card. On the sample card the swimmer has been classified as S4, SB3 and SM4. This means that, for the purposes of freestyle, backstroke and butterfly events, the swimmer has been placed in class S4. For breaststroke events the swimmer has been placed in class SB3 and for individual medley events the swimmer has been placed in class SM4.

A swimmer may have multiple impairments and may, therefore, be classified into a number of classes. For example, a swimmer may have both a visual impairment (S13) and a hearing impairment (S15). However, they can only compete using one classification at a time. On entering the meet the swimmer must specify the classification they choose to compete with e.g., S15 for that meet.

For Multi-Class swimmers competing in a Multi-Class event, placings are determined by comparing the times swum with the World Record for the individual swimmer's classification. The Recorders need to be aware of each competitor's classification to be able to calculate the official placings. This may be done using the Meet Manager program (if specifically set up for a Disability meet), a specialised computer program such as Titanium, on a spreadsheet or by hand. The swimmer achieving a time closest to, if slower than, or furthest in advance of, the World Record for their classification, as published by the [WPS](#), will be awarded first place, with other swimmers ranked behind them.

The class into which a swimmer has been placed does not impact on the actions of the Referee with the exception of S11 swimmers, who must wear blacked-out goggles. In this instance, the Referee will then instruct Judges of Strokes 1 and 4 to check the S11 competitor's goggles at the completion of the race. Each S11 swimmer must also have a Tapper at each end of the pool where the swimmer will turn/finish.

5.1 Exceptions

Depending on their individual impairment, Multi-Class swimmers may be granted one or more Exceptions. These are listed on the swimmer's Classification Card and swimmers are required to show their Card to the Referee before the commencement of the meet so that the Referee can note, on their program, the Exceptions available to each competitor.

An Exception is a point at which the Rules of Swimming have been modified to take into account the capabilities of a Multi-Class swimmer. They are indicated on the back of the Classification Card with letters, numbers and symbols. The explanation for each of these is shown in the following table:

Starts		During Swimming	
H	Hearing Impaired - Light or signal required	1	One hand start
A	Assistance required	2	Breaststroke - One hand touch
E	Unable to grip for backstroke start	3	Breaststroke - simultaneous intent to touch
Y	Starting device	4	Butterfly - One hand touch
T	Tapper	5	Butterfly - simultaneous intent to touch
B	Blackened goggles	7	Part of upper body must touch
		8	Right foot must turn out
		9	Left foot must turn out
		12	Leg drag or show intent to kick
		+	Butterfly kick is able to be performed (illegal in Breaststroke)

At State Championships, Referees and Judges of Strokes will usually be supplied with a list of Multi-Class swimmers competing together with their Exceptions. While this removes the need for swimmers to show their Classification Card to the Referee, the Referee should still accept Cards from swimmers.

During the briefing the Referee should instruct Judges of Strokes and Inspectors of Turns to be just as vigilant with Multi-Class swimmers as they would be with able-bodied swimmers.

These swimmers do not want sympathy, they want to be treated as swimmers. If they break the Rules they expect to be, and should be, disqualified.

Multi-Class swimmer may enter an Open or Age Event against able-bodied swimmers. In this situation they are entitled to receive recognition for all their Exceptions. It is also possible for them to set a Record for their Classification in such a race. Such a Record will be recognised if all the criteria for the establishment of a record have been met. There is a separate Record Application Form for Multi-Class Swimming, an example of which can be found in [Appendix 11.2](#).

The Referee should instruct Judges of Strokes and Inspectors of Turns, who do not have a copy of the Exceptions List, to report all observed Rule Infractions whilst applying common sense. For example, it is common sense that a swimmer with only one arm cannot be expected to touch the wall with two hands, simultaneously, at the end of a breaststroke race.

A Multi-Class swimmer is entitled to have a Support Staff on deck with them provided this is indicated on their Classification Card with an 'A' ([WPS10.7.2](#)). The role of Support Staff is to assist the Multi-Class swimmer logistically or with directional instructions. The actual assistance provided will vary from swimmer to swimmer but Support Staff are not permitted to coach.

Where a vision-impaired swimmer is using Tappers (mandatory for S11 athletes), the Referee is required to inspect the device(s) to be used and determine that they are safe before the device(s) can be used. Support staff are not permitted to have a visible stopwatch with them while they are on the pool deck during a race.

Appendix 6: Open Water Swimming

Open Water swimming involves competition over long distances outside the pool environment. Accredited Referees can apply for assessment for the OWS (Open Water Swimming) Extension to their Referee Accreditation.

Referees without the OWS Extension are still Referees, capable of officiating at Open Water Swimming competitions. Before attempting to do so, Referees should make themselves familiar with the [Open Water Training Notes](#), the [Rules of Open Water Swimming](#), the [Open Water Checklist](#) and the [Open Water Duty Lists](#) available on the SNSW website.

As swimmers will be competing in an open environment, the safety of competitors assumes a much greater importance.

- The Clerks of Course check each swimmer as they report and stamp an allocated number on each of the swimmer's shoulders and on their upper arms, both right and left. The Clerks of Course are, thus, able to inform the Chief Referee how many swimmers to expect
- The Chief Clerk of Course will then count swimmers as they enter the start area/water, checking them off against the list of swimmers who have reported. Again, the number of starters is relayed to the Chief Referee
- The Chief Referee, in the Competitors' Briefing, will have instructed all swimmers that, should they leave the water before completing the event, they must report to the Chief Clerk of the Course at a specified position who will then report this to the Chief Referee
- During the running of the event, the various Referees on the water will regularly count the swimmers in the water and report to the Chief Referee any swimmer they assist or observe to leave the water prior to the finish
- The Chief Referee will instruct the Referees on the water to position themselves to provide the greatest possible coverage of the swimmers in the water
- At the conclusion of the event, the Chief Referee will receive a report from the Chief Clerk of Course as to the number of swimmers who have been accounted for
- All these communications will take place via Radio Headsets.

Appendix 7: Conflict at a Swimming Competition

7.1 Stakeholders

Conflict can involve any of the stakeholders of a meet. These include:

- Meet Director
- Technical Officials
- Venue Officials
- Pool management
- Coaches
- Parents
- Swimmers

7.2 Reasons for Conflict

There are several reasons which may cause a situation where conflict arises. Some of these include:

- Lack of understanding of the Rules and procedures of Swimming
- Lack of consistency across sessions, across days of a meet or even across meets
- Poor communication
- Pressure from coaches, parents, swimmers - especially where winning is important
- Limited Officials
- Personalities

7.2.1 Lack of Understanding of the Rules and Procedures of Swimming

Though it is incumbent on all parties to gain an understanding of the Rules, each stakeholder group is ultimately driven by their own priorities. The need to spend time reading and understanding all the Rules and Procedures may not be a priority over other activities involved with an athlete.

The knowledge of the Rules and Procedures of Swimming could be based upon general experience or discussion with peer groups, rather than with true knowledge and understanding.

7.2.2 Lack of Consistency

Inconsistent application of the Rules, especially across several days of a large meet such as State Age Long Course Championships can occur quite easily because there will be a number of Officials undertaking the various roles. If a process or an approach as to how coaches and swimmers are dealt with is varied, it is very likely that a level of confusion will occur that will lead to conflict. Key areas where this can occur include:

- Referees
 - Infractions/Disqualifications
 - Protests/Juries of Appeal
 - Management of Officials

- Clerk of Course (Marshal)/Check Starter
 - Marshalling procedures
 - Withdrawal procedures
 - Advertising logos/identifications
 - Apparel/pool deck equipment

- Rule evolution across a season or several seasons

- FINA approved swimsuits

- The levels of competition

7.2.3 Poor Communication

A key component in all conflict is the use, or many times lack of, good communication.

It must be acknowledged that people are all different and will have different preferred means of absorbing information and interpreting words and meanings.

Between any two individuals, there will always be some difference between the meaning and intent of a message that is being conveyed and the way that message is received and/or perceived by the receiver.

This can be partially attributed to each individual's mental model which will be a function of a number of personal and individual circumstances:

- Assumptions
- Experiences
- Perceptions
- Images
- Stereotypes
- Biases

Another consideration is that research has indicated that:

- 55% of the information that people derive is from non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, body language and emotions (visual)
- 38% of the information that people derive comes from the tone of voice (vocal)
- 7% of the information people derive comes from the words people hear (verbal)
- For the telephone, 82% comes from the tone of voice and 18% from the words

An inference is that 93% of the meaning of a conversation is taken from means other than the words used.

An area often neglected is the art of listening. People are often too engaged with other activities or issues to take the time to actively listen.

7.2.4 Pressure

Swimming is not necessarily the easiest of sports. The dedication required to attain and retain a competitive level is quite high and is not achieved without a good deal of self-sacrifice, pain and many years of arduous training.

Coaches, parents and athletes each have sets of expectations formed from a good deal of investment. These may include, but not be inclusive of:

- Time, effort and cost - early starts, lost weekends, hours spent training and competing
- Status and Reputation - swimmers and coaches may have a lot resting on their respective performances
- Expectations - from the parents, the coaches and swimmers

A missed swim or a perceived disadvantage is likely to create conflict.

7.2.5 The Limited Number of Officials

The number and frequency of swim meets, the challenges of recruiting, training and retention of Officials and, especially, Referees, and the pressure of increasing time poverty, means that meets are increasingly becoming short staffed.

Despite the best of endeavours, training and information resources, there are increasing chances that:

- Procedures may not be followed
- People are being over-worked
- Disagreements may arise regarding who does what
- And of course, evolution and change

All of the above add to increasing pressure on Officials and often in challenging circumstances.

7.2.6 Personalities

There are a number of different models of human behaviour, as well as differences between individuals for preferred means of giving and receiving information.

7.3 Resolving Conflict

A Referee faced with a conflict situation could use the techniques referred to below. These include:

- Having a thorough awareness of roles and responsibilities for:
 - Themselves
 - The other Technical Officials
 - Meet Management being either the Technical Manager, Meet Director or Meet Committee
- Having a good knowledge and understanding of the Rules and Procedures of Swimming
- Treating people at the meet with:
 - Respect
 - Empathy
 - Dignity
- Working the problem, not the people or personalities
- Where a mistake has been made, acknowledge the mistake and then fix it.

Despite the best conflict minimisation strategies, conflict will occur. Referees need to use appropriate strategies to deal with the conflict. Some guidelines include:

- Remaining calm
- Moving conflict away from the view of spectators and swimmers. If this requires a Referee to move off deck, there needs to be a handover to the alternate Referee or a Judge of Strokes
- Referees need to be aware of their hot buttons and not react automatically
- Referees managing themselves. Should a person become very heated, Referees could consider the following to manage themselves:
 - Speaking to the person as if the person is not heated
 - Avoid using the word “you” - this avoids any perception of blame
 - Active listening
 - Maintaining eye contact
- Giving a person time to vent. Avoiding interrupting them or judging what they are saying or about to say
- Verifying that they are accurately hearing the other person. Mirroring and paraphrasing are effective tools
- Using the word “I” rather than “you” when presenting the Referee’s position
- Acknowledging where they agree and where they disagree with the other person
- Thanking the person for working with them.

Appendix 8: AOE Printout of First Relay Changeover OSM 6 Printout

OMEGA SWIM-O-MATIC OSM 6			
ARMING:			15 SEC
LAPS :			01
PROG :			AUTO
EVENT :	090	HEAT :	01
READY FOR NEW RACE			
EVENT	090 HEAT : 01		
P	16.05:19.95		
L L			
A A L	10/06/96		
C N A			
E E P	RESULT		
1 5 1	54.93		
D 5 1	+ 0.42		
2 6 1	55.27		
D 6 1	+0.59		
3 4 1	57.38		
D 4 1	- 0.46		
4 2 1	58.71		
5 3 1	59.01		
6 7 1	59.34		
7 1 1	59.42		
D 2 1	+ 0.18		
8 8 1	1:00.73		
D 3 1	+ 0.61		
D 1 1	+ 0.76		
D 7 1	---		
D 8 1	+ 0.23		

D in the Place column indicates the delay between the touch and take-off for that lane.

The recording of +0.59 for lane 6 indicates the take-off occurred 0.59 seconds after the touch was recorded. This is a legal take-off.

The recording of -0.46 for lane 4 indicates the take-off occurred 0.46 seconds before the touch was recorded. This is an illegal take off and the AOE Operator/CRS must report the infraction to the Referee.

The --- symbol for Lane 7 indicates no default for that lane and no time delay recorded. Depending on the equipment, this could also be recorded as +0.00 or -0.00. This is a legal take off.

A negative (-) symbol indicates an early take-off and must be reported by the AOE Operator/CRS to the Referee. On advice from equipment manufacturers, FINA procedures provide that no disqualification is made unless the time difference between the take-off and the incoming touch exceeds a tolerance advised by the manufacturer for that particular equipment.

The tolerance will vary with the equipment being used. In the case of Quantum and Ares 21 this tolerance is -0.03 seconds. Where relay take-off equipment is in operation for a meet, the Referee should check with the Meet Director and obtain the tolerance advised by the manufacturer.

A positive (+) or --- symbol indicates no default on change-over. The example above illustrates an AOE printout where one swimmer has broken: Lane 4 - indicated by the negative symbol (-) against the time.

Recurrence of any --- symbol on a particular lane, or excessive time differences, may indicate equipment failure in which case the Referee will subsequently rely on the Inspector of Turns' reports for that lane.

Appendix 9: Rule Infraction Card

[Rule Infraction Card](#)

Where a Referee is not satisfied with the wording used by the reporting Official on the Rule Infraction Card, they should advise that Official of the required wording and ask them to complete a new form. It is permissible for the Referee to provide guidance or direction as to the wording to be used.

Appendix 10: Protest Form

[Protest Form](#)

Appendix 11: Record Application Forms

11.1 SNSW NSW Record Application Form

[NSW Record Application Form](#)

11.2 SNSW NSW Multi-Class Record Application Form

[NSW Multi-Class Record Application Form](#)

Appendix 12: Rule Consideration Guidelines

[Rule Consideration Guidelines](#)