

## Open Water Swimming Risk Management

Although there are many similarities with the risks involved between the organising and running of a “still water” or pool swim meet and an Open Water competition there are obviously some items that are unique to the organising and running of Open Water events.

This section attempts to assist those bodies who wish to organise and run an Open Water Swimming event. These checklists are not exhaustive and events will arise that have not been considered for in this checklist however, they attempt to offer some suggestions on to run a safe and successful swim meet.

### Open Water Swimming Risk Management Checklist

1.	Venue	Yes	No	Action
1.1	Has the venue been checked for General safety			
1.2	Is the venue safe for competition in all types of weather conditions?			
1.3	Is a licence to conduct the event required from a Government Authority or some other responsible body?			
1.4	Have any licensing requirements been met?			
1.5	Is exclusive use of the venue for the event necessary?			
1.6	If necessary, has closure of the venue been organised?			
1.7	Has a "Water Quality" certificate been obtained?			
1.8	Is an accurate survey map of the venue available?			
1.9	Is there a Course Plan available for the Referee?			

1.10	Are there Course Plans available for the competitors?			
1.11	Is there access to power, fresh water, and appropriate amenities?			
1.12	Is there adequate shelter available at the venue?			
1.13	Is the venue subject to tidal change?			
1.14	Is the venue a habitat for sharks or other predators?			
1.15	Is adequate parking available			
1.16	If possible, has an appropriate contingency venue been identified			

**2. Community Services and Medical Support**      Yes      No      Action

2.1	Have the following Community Services been advised of the event?			
2.2	Police			
2.3	Hospital			
2.4	Ambulance			
2.5	St John's Ambulance / Qualified First Aid personnel			

2.6	Has a Medical Officer been appointed?			
2.7	Are space blankets for hypothermia available?			
2.8	Has a medical area been identified near the course exit area, and appropriate infrastructure sourced?			
2.9	Are oxygen canisters for admission of oxygen available?			
2.10	Is there easy ambulance access?			

**3. Equipment** Yes No Action

3.1	Are there adequate turn buoys, course markers, and anchors/weighting systems?			
3.2	Will a finish gate be used?			
3.3	Have an appropriate number of power boats and jet ski's been made available with licensed operators for Referees?			
3.4	Are all powered craft fitted with appropriate propeller guards and safety devices (kill switches, etc.)			
3.5	Is a minimum of 8 paddle boards with paddlers available?			
3.6	Is there a thermometer for use by the Referee?			
3.7	Are digital watches with in-built printers available?			

3.8	Is two way radio communication available?			
3.9	Has a loud hailer or PA system been sourced for general communication and emergency requirements?			
3.10	Are appropriate starting and signalling devices available?			
3.11	Are adequate waiver forms available?			
3.12	Is video recording available?			
3.13	Are life jackets available for Officials working on the water?			

**4. Entries/Entrants**    Yes      No                          Action

4.1	Have entries been checked for complete details			
4.2	Are there any age restrictions applicable?			
4.3	Has every entrant been allocated a unique sequential number?			

**5. Emergency Plan and Water Safety**    Yes      No                          Action

5.1	Has an emergency plan been devised?			
5.2	Have all officials been briefed on the emergency plan?			

5.3	Has a water safety manager been appointed?			
5.4	Has a water safety plan been devised based on expected entry numbers and course layout?			

**6. Technical Officials and Volunteers**      Yes      No      Action

6.1	Are adequate Technical Officials and volunteers available?			
6.2	Do the officials have experience at open water events?			
6.3	Are the Referees accredited open water swimming officials?			
6.4	Are the Technical Officials proficient swimmers?			
6.5	Technical Officials who are not proficient swimmers are not permitted on the water or in any craft or boats.			