

SWIMMING AUSTRALIA MEDIA POLICY

Reference Number:	MC-01
Responsible Officer:	General Manager, Marketing and Communications
Approval Date:	April 4 2014
Approval Authority:	Swimming Australia Board
Date of Next Review:	October 4 2014

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Media Policy is to provide guidance for members of the Australian Swim Team and administrators in the effective and productive use of media channels, including social media, to promote and grow the sport of swimming.

APPLICATION

Persons bound by this Policy include athletes, coaches, employees, independent contractors, Swimming Australia employees and Board members.

POLICY STATEMENT

Swimming Australia promotes positive interaction with the media and encourages the appropriate use of media channels, including social media, by all persons bound by this Policy.

Swimming Australia sees media interaction as the best way to engage with fans, communicate with the general public and promote the sport of swimming, including major events and community programs, the Australian Swim Team and individual athletes.

Swimming Australia acknowledges that traditional media – print, radio and television – is the primary source of promoting the sport to the mass market and provides the sport with the best opportunity to promote itself, its partners and sponsors.

Swimming Australia also acknowledges that social media has now also become a broad and instant form of communication and treats all social media content, whether written, photographic, video, or audio, as public comment which is accessible to all.

The Swimming Australia Media Policy requires athletes, coaches, administrators and members to at all times use media, including social media, in a productive and positive manner that promotes the sport of swimming and which affords respect to individuals and organisations involved in the sport.

The Media Policy forms part of a framework of documents that underpin the Ethical Framework for Swimming.

POLICY OPERATION

A. Reputation

Swimming is the most successful and highest profile Olympic and Paralympic sport in Australia and as a result has developed a strong reputation with Australian and international media.

Media coverage of swimming, the Australian Swim Team, the athletes and coaches involved and stories in and out of the pool can generate huge exposure in both a positive and negative sense. Every member, athlete, coach, staff member, board member and administrator is responsible for the profile of our sport and should respect that responsibility by interacting with the media in a positive manner.

The challenge for all Swimming Members is to positively promote swimming and maintain the credibility that has been developed over more than 100 years of success in and out of the pool.

As members of the Australian Swim Team and Swimming Australia, athletes have the ability to attract positive and negative publicity for the sport, its sponsors and stakeholders. It is the responsibility of all athletes to respect their role within the sport and uphold the principles outlined in the Ethical Framework for the greater good of swimming.

B. Media Guidelines

Swimming Australia promotes the following Media Guidelines for use in all media interaction. In following these Guidelines, Team Members (including athletes, coaches, employees, independent contractors, staff, Board members and other Swimming Australia members) may express their own opinions, provided they follow the ***Ethical Framework for Australian Swimming***.

These are guidelines only and may be supplemented or amended or varied by Swimming Australia at any time in their absolute discretion.

- (a) **GOLDEN RULE: Do not comment negatively on any member of the Australia Swim Team or Swimming Australia Member, the governing body as a whole or any Swimming Australia program, sponsor or stakeholder.**
- (b) Team Members should only speak, post, tweet or 'retweet' about themselves and their own performances. Team Members should not discuss the performance of any other team-mate, rival or squad member.
- (c) In giving any interviews or engaging in any social media activities Team Members must not disparage or criticise other Team Members, their performances, coaching or disclose any confidential information. Team Members means athletes, coaches and management.
- (d) The Director, High Performance or his delegated appointee, is the official team spokesperson and therefore the only Team Member permitted to speak on behalf of, or about the entire Australian Swim Team without prior written approval from Swimming Australia.
- (e) From time to time, the CEO, President or a CEO appointed individual will be deemed the Swimming Australia spokesperson and therefore the only Team Member permitted to speak on behalf of, or about the organisation without prior written approval of Swimming Australia.
- (f) Team or individual coaches should only speak about athletes in their own coaching group or relay squad.

- (g) Team Members should not speak with, write for (act as a journalist) or provide quotes to any media representative without the written permission of the Director, High Performance, CEO, or Team Media Manager.
- (h) Team Members are at liberty to accept or decline to be interviewed by the media, but are reminded of the commitment that the national team has a responsibility to share the journey and connect with those who invest in and believe in the sport.
- (i) It is the personal responsibility of each Team Member to attend media conferences or interviews approved by the Director, High Performance or Team Media Manager.
- (j) In giving any interview that includes a visual element, Team Members must wear items of uniform as determined and advised by the Team Media Manager.
- (k) Where a team member is involved in an interview or press conference for performance, community or commercial reasons it is their responsibility to read any briefing notes provided to ensure information shared publicly is factually correct.

C. Media Management

Swimming Australia endeavours to manage and promote media engagement in a proactive manner to further enhance the profile of the sport and its Members.

Swimming Australia will provide Media Managers to travel with all major teams to manage media commitments around key international events, where and when applicable. In the event that a Media Manager does not travel with a team, the Head of Delegation of that team becomes the primary point of contact for all Media Management.

- (a) All media requests should come directly to the Team Media Manager or Head of Delegation (if no Media Manager is travelling with the team). If Team Members are contacted directly, they should pass on all information to the Team Media Manager or Head of Delegation.
- (b) The Team Media Manager acts as the liaison between all media and the Australian Swim Team. In doing so they will provide daily briefings for the Director, High Performance (or Head of Delegation) and for those coaches and athletes that may be required for updates.
- (c) Outside of Mixed Zone requirements at a major competition, Team Media Managers will seek the approval of the swimmer and the swimmer's team coach before any interview is arranged and undertaken.

Outside of team media commitments and interaction, athletes, coaches, staff and administrators are reminded of their responsibility to promote the sport and not comment negatively on any member of the Australian Swim Team or Swimming Australia Member, the governing body as a whole or any Swimming Australia program, partner or stakeholder.

D. Media Commitments

Team members are to participate in media commitments in accordance as reasonably requested to do so by Swimming Australia.

Team members may decline Swimming Australia's request for a media commitment where:

- (a) The commitment would cause the swimmer to breach a Third Party Agreement; or
- (b) On other reasonable grounds including the grounds set out in the Appearance Policy

Team members must not enter into any agreement, arrangement or understanding that would have the effect of restricting or limiting the member's availability to all sections of the media.

Team members must at all times demonstrate behaviours consistent with the Code of Ethical Behaviour and Code of Conduct in participating in media commitments.

A Team member must inform Swimming Australia prior to any opportunity where he or she will be communicating or commenting to the media unless such comment or communication is limited to his or her performance or the performance of a competitor in the actual event the Swimmer is interviewed about in order to provide the Swimmer with the opportunity to be briefed with relevant information.

The Team member participating in a media commitment must adhere to the items of clothing nominated by SAL for that specific commitment or from time to time provided however that in default of a nomination then the most current team clothing distributed to the Swimmer and to the entire team should always be worn;

A Team member shall not without approval from Swimming Australia with such approval not to be unreasonably withheld either participate in or make any arrangement to:

- (a) Participate in an exclusive media interview whether or not for reward with a broadcaster that is a competitor of a Qualifying Sponsor;
- (b) Act as a journalist or in any other media capacity; or
- (c) Authorise any public or media comment.

The Team member must use his or her best endeavours to ensure his or her advisors, including but not limited to coaches, athlete managers, legal advisors, marketing or public relations advisors, and personal sponsors are made aware of and agree to comply with this policy.

E. Broadcast Partners

Swimming Australia is in the fortunate position to be able to sell exclusive television, online and radio broadcast rights for key domestic and international events. Swimming Australia's television broadcast partner is Network Ten and from time-to-time Swimming Australia will also sell radio and online broadcast rights.

All Swimming Australia Members are encouraged to work with Swimming Australia and their Broadcast Partners to promote the sport.

Swimmers, coaches, officials and Members should therefore cooperate with all reasonable requests from Swimming Australia's broadcast partners for interviews, access to training and access for promotional opportunities to further promote the sport.

- (a) Where athletes, coaches or other Swimming Australia members may have an exclusive media deal with a rival broadcast partner, that arrangement needs to be approved in writing by the CEO of Swimming Australia and will not be approved if it impinges on Swimming Australia's ability to fulfil existing or future broadcast partnerships.

F. Social Media Postings, Blogs and Tweets

Swimming Australia treats all written social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets as 'public comment'. As a result, all Persons bound by this Policy should not comment or respond to a

comment in a way that may be construed as negative or may be considered derogatory towards others, or put themselves in a situation where they may harm their reputation, the reputation of their teammates, the Australian Swim Team, or Swimming Australia, including its sponsors and stakeholders or any other third party.

G. Photographs, Video, Audio

Swimming Australia also treats all photographs, video and audio 'material' posted onto social media as 'public comment' and accessible to the public.

Any material that may be considered negative, derogatory or inappropriate towards Persons bound by this Policy should not be posted. Where content is gathered in a team or event environment as part of standard media and communications practices by Swimming Australia staff, approval for posting such material is covered under the relevant team and competition entry agreements.

Persons bound by this Policy should also be mindful that material posted may be subject to intellectual property rights and all relevant consents and waivers should be obtained before using any material that may be subject to intellectual property rights.

H. Education

Swimming Australia makes a commitment to actively educate Persons bound by this Policy on best practice in terms of interacting with traditional media and the use of social media.

Swimming Australia encourages 'positive posting' as a means of communicating via social media. Swimming Australia works with the Australian Sports Commission, ASCTA, the Australian Swimmers Association, Australian Federal Police and other like-minded organisations to educate members on what is an appropriate use of social media, and what is not.

Team members are bound to take part in these education opportunities, which will also focus on the positives associated with social media usage, as per their obligations in their Swimmer Agreement.

I. Liability

When Persons bound by this Policy choose to go public with any comments or material in any way, including on social media, they are solely responsible for such comments and materials.

Individuals should be aware that they can be held personally liable for any comments and material that may be deemed to be defamatory, obscene or proprietary. In essence, persons bound by this Policy post comments and materials at their own risk.

Further, persons bound by this Policy should at all times make it clear that any comments and materials are made in their individual capacity and that they do not represent Swimming Australia, its sponsors or any other third party.

J. Monitoring

Swimming Australia regularly monitors social media content of persons bound by this Policy. Swimming Australia also monitors traditional media and online content which could impact on the

reputation and brand image of the Australian Swim Team, individuals in that team, Swimming Australia itself as well as sponsors and stakeholders.

K. Infringements

A breach of this Media Policy will be a breach of the applicable Team Membership or Swimmer Agreement. In addition to any disciplinary procedures set out in the applicable Agreements, Swimming Australia reserves its right to take any other appropriate measures with respect to infringements of this Policy, including issuing a Take Down notice, imposing other sanctions, and or taking legal action for damages.

L. Amendment/Interpretation

Swimming Australia reserves the right to amend this Policy as it deems appropriate. The Swimming Australia Board shall be the final authority with respect to the interpretation and implementation of this Policy.

M. Major Events/Other Teams

Persons bound by this Policy are advised that their participation on other teams and at other major events such as the Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games may involve an adherence to additional guidelines, by laws and contractual obligations, in relation to media and social media.

Where team agreements are in place for such teams and events, such guidelines, by laws and contractual obligations need to be followed in conjunction with this Policy to the greatest extent possible.

DEFINITIONS

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Responsible Officer. Amendments are to be approved by the Board of Swimming Australia prior to implementation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

REFERENCES AND RELATED MATERIALS

Document Number	Title
	Ethical Framework for Swimming
	Swimmers, Coaches and SAL Codes of Conduct
	Swimmer Agreement
	Team Agreement

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Version	Initiating Officer	Details
16/04/13	0.1	L. Searle / J. Turner	First draft
16/04/13	0.2	L. Searle	Review and amend
17/04/13	0.3	J. Turner	Addition of Media Commitments section
18/04/13	0.4	L. Searle	Review and amend
22/04/13	0.5	L. Searle	Replying to comments from Daniel Kowalski
15/05/13	0.6	J. Turner	Minor amendment
20/03/14	0.7	L. Searle	Typo amendment - finalised for April 4 Board Meeting