



World Para Swimming Officials Pathway

Sue Prasad

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Aims of the Presentation



- To introduce you to the WPS Officials Pathway
- To offer some general guidance on officiating at events with para swimmers

- WPS has created an educational programme for all people interested in learning or becoming an official at WPS recognised competitions.
- World Para Swimming works with its education partners; IPC Academy and World Academy of Sport (WAoS), for the ongoing learning and development of athletes, coaches, classifiers and officials.
- The programme combines the use of digital media and face-to-face training modules and practical competency assessment at approved WPS para-swimming competition.

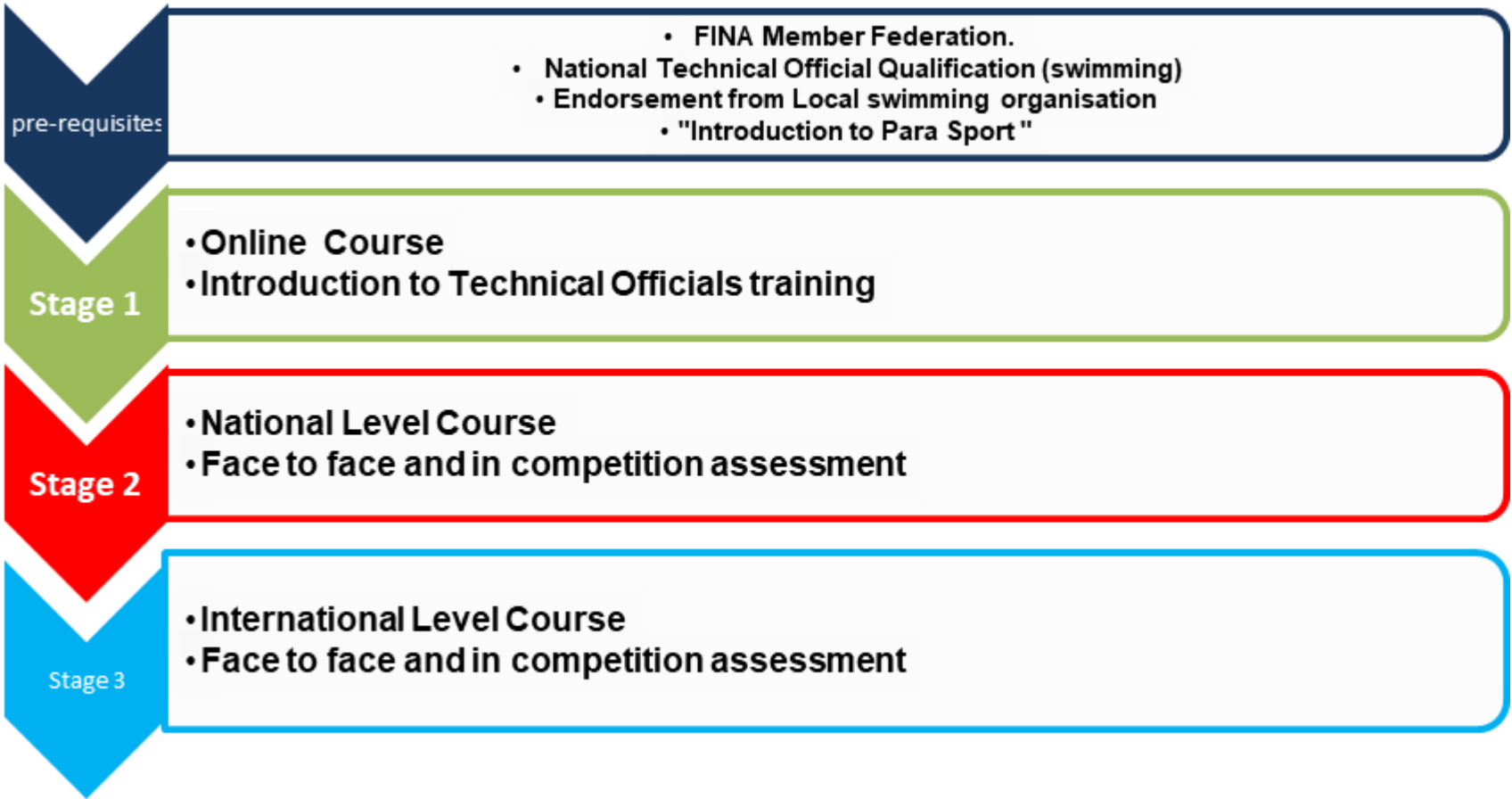
Eligibility



To be eligible to attend the training to become an WPS Technical Official, you must:

- Hold a current qualification from your National Swimming Federation or FINA (minimum of Judge of Stroke level)
- Have the recommendation or endorsement of your National Swimming Federation and/or National Paralympic Committee.
- Possess a good working knowledge of both spoken and written English (English is the official language used within WPS)

Officials Pathway



WPS TOs



- Technical Officials (TO's) are IF (International Federation) officials.
- They have responsibility to ensure the competition is run fairly and within the rules and regulations of the sport.
- The person in charge of the overall operations at a competition is the Technical Delegate (TD).
- 'IF Officials' also includes Classifiers who are responsible for the process of classification.

Responsibilities



- Technical Officials have the responsibility to ensure the competition is run fairly and within the rules and regulations of the sport.
- Officiating at an event for athletes with an impairment has many additional challenges, however, the basis and practise of officiating remains the same as for able bodied officials.
- Fair and consistent application of the swimming rules and regulations of the sport.
- The objective of the WPS training courses is to provide existing technical officials with the additional knowledge, skills and understandings to be a competent, successful para-swimming technical official.

Objectivity

- As TO's it can sometimes be a challenge to remain objective when officiating, as our athletes have impairments and the natural desire is to help them.
- It is important to remember para-swimmers are elite athletes; it is about what they **can do** rather than what they cannot do.
- The role of the official is to ensure the rules are enforced at all times in every event and every athlete is judged fairly, equitably and with impartially.

Teamwork



- Technical Officials have to work as a team.
- WPS appointed technical officials bring their own personal strengths to a competition. Part of working well within a team is the acceptance of others and pooling of knowledge and resources.
- Each competition works differently (especially from competitions run at your home pool), so technical officials need to be able to work flexibly, following instructions and accepting differences in operating practice.

Qualities of a Good Official



A good technical official should be:

- Thoroughly knowledgeable of the technical rules and regulations
- Able to focus for a significant period of time
- Able to work as part of a team
- Reflective, be able to assess and review how you handled situations and calls
- Remain calm, ability to cope with pressure, firm but fair
- Good communicator
- Be unobtrusive on deck, remember it's the athletes the crowd came to see
- Friendly and courteous
- Consistent
- Fit both physically and mentally
- Respectful

WPS Rules and Regulations



In order to officiate at Para-swimming competitions, the official will need:-

- A thorough understanding of the WPS Rules and Regulations
- To have the current edition of the WPS Rules and Regulations
- Knowledge of the Technical Officials Operating manual
- Knowledge of the WPS processes and procedures

WPS Rule and Regulations replicate swimming rules from the FINA Rule Book and incorporate WPS sport specific rules and exceptions to FINA rules, ensuring athletes are judged fairly and in accordance with their abilities.

Codes of Exception

- Rule exceptions that result from the swimmers impairment are identified and given a code using letters and numbers.....these are referred to as Codes of Exception (CoE)
- Technical Officials need to understand and be able to apply the CoE
- However any decisions to report a swimmer to the Referee for an infraction, must be **based on the Rules** not the CoE.
- CoE are used as a guide only to assist the official.

CoE - Starts



- H HEARING IMPAIRED LIGHT/SIGNAL REQ
- Y STARTING DEVICE
- E UNABLE TO GRIP FOR BACKSTROKE START
- A ASSISTANCE REQUIRED
- T TAPPERS
- B BLACKENED GOGGLES

CoE - During the Swim



- 0 NIL
- 1 ONE HAND START
- 2 BREASTSTROKE – ONE HAND TOUCH
- 3 BREASTSTROKE - SIMULTANEOUS INTENT
TO TOUCH
- 4 BUTTERFLY – ONE HAND TOUCH
- 5 BUTTERFLY - SIMULTANEOUS INTENT TO TOUCH
- 7 PART OF UPPER BODY MUST TOUCH

CoE - During the Swim

- 8 RIGHT FOOT MUST TURN OUT
- 9 LEFT FOOT MUST TURN OUT
- 12 LEG DRAG OR SHOW INTENT TO KICK
- + ATHLETE IS PHYSICALLY CAPABLE OF PERFORMING A BUTTERFLY KICK

Accommodating Para Swimmers at events



- More and more swimmers with an impairment are choosing to swim at Open or abled bodied competitions
- We should all support the athletes to compete in these competitions.
- Para-Swimmers do not want to be treated differently.
- Officials **MUST** be prepared to make calls when necessary.

Officiating



- As officials we can make a difference, using common sense and flexibility.
- WPS rules are based on FINA rules, with rule exceptions made to accommodate a swimmer's impairment.
- Remember – the purpose of rule exceptions is to provide fair competition NOT to relax swimming standards.
- So having a good knowledge of FINA rules will help you officiate at para swimming meets.

Swimmers with Physical Limitations



- May need an assistant on poolside.
- Common sense needs to be used, as not all impairments are readily seen.
- Judgements should be made based on swimming rules, not the swimmers technique.
- The aim is to officiate the ability that the swimmer has.

Deaf Swimmers



- Starting modifications may be made.
- A hand signal may be needed to get swimmers onto the starting platform/into water for the start.
- Strobe light, visual signal or touch start can be used.
- Distance events – visual signal can be given instead of whistle/bell.
- DSQ – show the swimmer the slip to read, if communication is a problem.
- Some swimmers who have other physical impairments may also be deaf, so these adjustments would also apply.

Visually Impaired Swimmers

- May have assistance onto starting platform and may need time to orientate themselves on the starting platform.
- May use a tapper (helpers who "tap" the swimmer to signify the turn/finish of the pool) - For S11 swimmers this is compulsory along with opaque (blackened in) goggles for those athletes with CoE B. The goggles are checked at the end of the race by the JoS.
- May surface in wrong lane – if so, allow them to move back into their lane or remain in that lane if it is empty.

Intellectual Impairments

- These swimmers are S14s and will have no Codes of Exception.
- May do the unexpected.
- Starts may be made from an upright position or slow/delayed reaction times.
- DSQ – appropriate language should be used when explaining DSQ to swimmer.

Remember....



- Rules and/or Regulations cannot be made for every eventuality.
- Judge what you see – do not generalise.
- There is no substitute for common sense.
- These are athletes/swimmers - treat them as such.

Thank you!

