

Swimming Technical Officials

Roles and Pathways

Volunteers are the 'back bone' of sport in NZ and swimming requires a huge number of volunteer officials to run a successful club carnival or meet – upwards of 40 at a Regional Championship or National Meet!

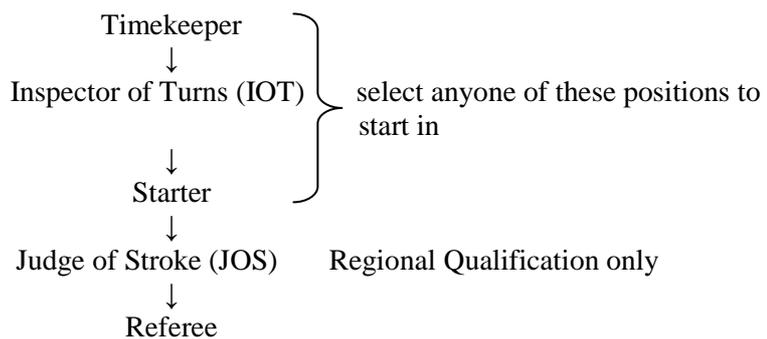
So, if you find sitting in a grandstand seat all day rather tiresome, why not become an official? There are many benefits.

You will –

- learn new skills and knowledge
- work in a dynamic team environment
- team up with a mentor
- have the opportunity to meet and make new friends
- be challenged but in a supportive way
- have some of the best views of the swimmers
- be appreciated by the swimmers
- have fun

1. Technical Officials Pathway

There are two levels of qualification – Regional and National. So let's begin at the **Regional Level** where you have a choice of start points. A lot of people start as a timekeeper but you also have the option of starting as an IOT or starter. However, to become a Referee you must have completed your Timekeeper, Inspector of Turns (IOT), Starter (and not necessarily in that order) and Judge of Stroke (JOS) assessments.



Timekeeper

The most needed and important official because you take the time of the swimmer in your assigned lane. All swimmers and coaches need times to see how well they are doing. Swimmers need qualifying times to enter a meet so the role of timekeeping is extremely important to a swimmer. A stop watch is used to take times and at some meets you will also use an electronic backup button. There are usually 3 timekeepers assigned to each lane. This is one place you can start your journey as an official.

Inspector of Turns (IOT)

You ensure that swimmers comply with the rules at the start, at turns and finishes. The rules differ for each stroke, so you will need to know the rules about each swimming stroke. Your jurisdiction is the first stroke out at the start, from the wall at turns and, the last stroke in to the wall at the finish. IOT's stand, in a lane, at each end of the pool and you get a bird's eye view!

Starter

The starter has full control of the swimmers from the time the referee raises her/his arm until the race commences. You will work very closely with the referee to ensure all swimmers get a fair start.

Judge of Stroke (JOS)

Stroke Judges walk the sides of the pool to ensure that the rules relating to the stroke being swum are being adhered to in the lanes under their jurisdiction. You will also assist the IOT's and the referee. This is a Regional Qualification only.

Referee

Referees have full control over all officials and swimmers. The referee must enforce all rules and any decisions made regarding the conditions of the meet. He/she is in charge of the team of officials for the session/s.

Qualifications for Technical Officials

At each level there is a verbal and practical assessment carried out in a relaxed manner. After qualifying at a Regional level you can go on to qualify as a National Official and be involved in National Meets around NZ. This will also open opportunities for you to officiate at international meets.

2. Administrative Roles

Announcer

You are the voice of the Meet. You aim to ensure the smooth running of the meet by announcing general information, introducing the swimmers in each race and giving results if required. You have the opportunity to create an ambience for the meet.

Recorder

Your role will include checking times and results for discrepancies, recording any disqualifications and checking for new records.

Marshall

You will ensure that the swimmers are assembled for their correct event, heat and lane.

Automatic Officiating Device (AOD)

Your role entails mastering the electronic timing device when 'pads' are used to record swimmers' times.

Interested?

Your first step is to contact a technical official or the Club's Technical Advisor. They will inform you of the rules you will need to become acquainted with and team you with a mentor.

3. Resources

Your club can arrange –

- written material pertaining to the rules of swimming
- workshops
- qualified Regional and National technical officials willing to assist and support you
- Each swimming stroke is covered on You Tube – just type in FINA rules freestyle etc. (Be aware - some of these clips have not been updated to include recent rule changes – the current rules are 2013 – 2017)
- A FINA Technical Officials DVD, that covers the art of officiating, is also available.

4. Useful Websites –

- www.fina.org FINA is the international body that governs swimming worldwide. They set the rules.
- www.swimmingnz.org.nz Swimming New Zealand adopt the FINA rules and set regulations for NZ. Their Technical Advisory Committee supports all officials with information, workshops and answer queries.
- www.countiesswimming.org.nz Swimming Counties Manukau has detailed information on the various technical roles as well as other comprehensive information. Their Technical Panel is available to assist you through advice, workshops and assessments on your journey as a swimming official.

'Officials work as a team and assist each other along the way. Take the plunge today!'