

Dive Entry for Competitive Swimming Policy

Policy Context

General dive entry into water bodies is an emotive subject given a history of incidents contributing to personal injury. The dive entry into swimming pools has undergone a number of reviews over the last fifteen years with some risk minimisation changes in the swimming pool depth considered suitable for dive entry. There has also been a clearer 'distinction' between the recommended minimum depths for recreational swimmers as opposed to swimmers in a competition or training environment. The Swimming Australia Pool Depths Guidelines (adopted 2006) confirms Swimming Australia's policy position in relation to dive entries into swimming pools.

Policy Scope

The scope of this policy relates to the conduct of dive entry for swimming competition and swimming training under the supervision of a qualified coach, official or water safety teacher. The policy relates to dive entry into swimming pools that meet all health industry standards for water clarity and visibility. The policy does not relate to: dive entry for novice or recreation swimmers; dive entry without supervision of a coach, official or water safety teacher; or dive entry for open water environments.

Policy Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to inform swimming clubs, swimming facilities and swimming coaches or water safety teachers of Swimming Australia's position in relation to dive entry for swimming competition or swimming training. The policy is to assist Clubs, facilities, coaches and water safety teachers undertaking swimming events and training activities to make decisions and to issue directives to ensure safety of participants.

Policy

1. Preparation Guidelines

The following guidelines must be followed prior to undertaking dive entry for competition or training activities

- a. Swimming dive entry activities into a water depth less than 1.8metres must be supervised by an accredited ASCTA Swimming coach or under the control of an accredited Swimming Technical Official.
- b. A risk assessment checklist must be undertaken prior to the undertaking of dive entry activities at all pool facilities where the coach, technical official or swimmers are unfamiliar with the venue or the current facility condition.
- c. Swimmers must be able to consistently demonstrate shallow dive entry technique in water above 1.8 metres in depth and deemed competent in dive technique before undertaking dive entries at minimum SAL guideline depths.

2. Dive Entry Depth Guidelines

- a) Less than 1.0 metre - No dives. Events should start in the water. Relay changeovers should be from the water
- b) 1.0 metre to less than 1.2 metre - Concourse dive, providing concourse is not more than 0.4 metre above the water surface. If the concourse is greater than 0.4m above the water surface then all event start and relay changeovers should be for the water
- c) 1.2 metre to less than 1.35 metre – Concourse dive or Platform dive (As long as the platform is not more than 0.75 metre above the water surface)
- d) 1.35 metre and more - As per FINA Rule FR2.7

3. Shallow water starts in competition

If the water depth at the start end prevents compliance with the rules relating to dive starts, all competitors shall commence the race in the water and shall be positioned in the water with one hand on the wall and shall have both feet on the wall.

In relay races where the water depth is less than 1.0 metre the changeover shall be from the water, with the competitor having one hand and both feet on the wall at the point of changeover

Application

Swimming Australia will utilise this “Dive Entry for Competitive Swimming Policy” to inform clubs, coaches, facility operators, officials and facility owners of the adopted position of the sport. As such the policy will be:

- Displayed on the Swimming Australia website for reference;
- Distributed to state and territory associations, officials networks and club networks;
- Utilised as the reference for responding to all enquiries from clubs, facility operators, swimming officials and facility owners on specific swimming pool dive entry circumstances;&
- Applied to discussions with aquatic industry peak bodies in relation to the application of common standards where SAL is not directly involved.

Consultation

The “Dive Entry for Competitive Swimming Policy 2018” is consistent with the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) - “SP8 Starting Blocks (Starting Platforms” and “SD 7.3 Water Depths” which relate to the conduct of dives for competition and training under the supervision of a coach or water safety teacher. The policy incorporates the advice of the Australian Swim Coaches and Teachers Association (ASCTA) and is representative of the industry guidelines. ASCTA, RLSS, the State & Territory Swimming Associations and a number of aquatic facility partners were all engaged in the adoption of the policy.

Policy Review

This policy is due for review by Swimming Australia in June 2020