



Meet License Introduction and Rational

Under the auspices of Swim Ireland every year in excess of 100 competitions are run through the implementation of swimming galas and competitions, water polo matches and tournaments, diving and open water competitions. In the discipline of swimming it is estimated that over 60 swimming competitions are held annually. These competitions range from club based competitions to leagues (involving many clubs competing over a set period of time against each other). Swim Ireland competition planning would also feature both National and Regional competition programmes – within such programmes there may be also a range of standards of competition and galas to target swimmers of different levels of ability. These include everything from, Grade A, B and C galas and Division one and two championships etc. These types and range of competitions are held for mainstream swimming which also includes Paralympic and schools swimming however Masters swimming also organize and hold a range of events. As a National Governing Body these numbers are estimated as there is NO official log or requirement for any SI club, region or committee to detail the type of event they run and explain how it means swimmers needs.

Within the SI aquatics pathway it has been highlighted that “competition”, its structure and design, is a critical piece in helping our participants stay in the sport and develop appropriately through the aquatic pathway. We feel it is critical to put in place a meet license initiative that provides us with a comprehensive overview of the types of competition being run and when and how, in order to ensure a consistent raising of standards at all levels of competitions in the future. It is felt that at the lower levels of our sport galas and meets are being delivered due to market forces as opposed to considered timing and appropriateness of competition and the meet license initiative provides us with an opportunity to overcome this and be more strategic of when and where competitions takes place.

It is important there are qualification opportunities for swimmers at National and Regional levels, and the events offered in these competitions reflect the principles of the Competitive Development Continuum and Long Term Athlete Development. In addition it is important that the sport develops additional competitive opportunities for those swimmers who compete at Regional Level, but do not go further to National events.

It is also acknowledged that as swimming training is based around cyclic intervals, it is important for competitions to be planned throughout the year to complement their training. Most clubs will be training swimmers who are Regional & National qualifiers, and need to be able to target competitions at all these levels at the same time in their training cycle.

The submission of results as part of National and International Rankings within Ireland has limited consistency in terms of approach. Use of electronic timing and use of relevant SI membership numbers and appropriately spelt names of swimmers all can cause difficulties in compiling National rankings and in reality this means that results when compared between each other may be inconsistent and Swim Ireland can't commit to providing a consistent and fair approach for all swimmers currently under the existing structure – this is another valid reason as to why meet licensing is required urgently in Irish competition.

The remainder of this document provides common ground rules for the conduct of swimming events to ensure that, wherever possible, every swimmer will have the opportunity to swim in appropriate quality competition to enable them to achieve their full potential. The following document will outline the rational, a summary of the categories and all of the operations behind how the license can be applied for and who will manage the license and so-forth.



Meet Licensing Initiative

The Meet License Initiative is designed to offer three categories of competition classification in Ireland. The license process is a simple administration and planning exercise which must be completed by all competition organisers prior to the competition season in order to help support the new Swim Ireland calendar planning process. The initiative will be managed centrally through a Meet license panel and will have a specified Meet License Co-ordinator.

The purpose

The purpose of the license has been carefully considered and will be designed to do the following:

- Understand in detail the current competition landscape in Irish swimming and across the four regions
- Develop common standards for Irish Competitions including the use of standard terminology for defining competitions and their standards
- License clubs, Leagues and Regional and National competitions which in turn clarifies their standing from an insurance perspective and duty of care to Swim Ireland members. Where there are instances of unsanctioned events and Non Compliance Swim Ireland will have clear and fair process in place to deal with these issues.
- Promote best practice in offering a competition structure to meet participant needs through
 1. Influencing the content of meets in line with Long Term Athlete Development
 2. Monitoring and influencing the provision of accessible, appropriate and inclusive competition for all levels of ability and standard (Competition for All)
 3. Influence compliance by those concerned with calendar planning
- Ensure there is a monitoring of the process (Quality Control) to review the types and level of competitions and to review how to shape the competitions programme in the future to ensure it consistently meets the changing environment of sport.

In summary:

The purpose of setting up the meet licensing initiative is to ensure that all swimmers will have the opportunity to swim in competitions which are specific to their ability and that all competitions are run to the same standard.