

Technical Officials – Volunteers Needed

Masters Swimming in Australia was originally formed to meet the needs of older swimmers who still wished to compete regularly in events offering the range of events swum at the Olympics.

Over the years MSA have developed our own officials who ensure that not only do we enjoy our competitions but also that they are fair and the times swum are recognised internationally.

However, the number of qualified technical officials around the country is declining in all states and has reached critical levels in some states (Yes, officials get old as well and need to retire). The National Board of MSA has recognised the problem and arranged for the members of the National Technical Committee to meet in Sydney after the National Swim in April to review the current processes and suggest improvements.

Whilst there were no ground breaking revelations on how to get people to volunteer to become technical officials, an understanding of the different issues facing each state and the sharing of ideas resulted in some positive outcomes. The streamlining of current processes and some new initiatives to be introduced over the coming months will make the process of qualifying and re-accrediting as a Technical Official simpler and more accessible.

So, will you volunteer? Your help is needed.

As a swimming official for the last 20+ years with MSA and SAL, I can tell you it's not an onerous task, in fact it's rewarding. You meet great, like-minded people, have some fun and provide the necessary officials required to take an ordinary swim meet and make it a well-run, enjoyable meet for all. You even enjoy your swimming as well.

Why not take the first step and do the timekeeper course and learn to take and record times correctly. As swimmers, the measure of our performance is accurate times whether it's in Endurance 1000, club swims or National Championships.

After timekeeping you can progress to any of the other technical positions and eventually become a referee if you wish. Technical officials do not have to be members so encourage your family and friends to volunteer as well.

For details of courses contact your state branch, club or talk to officials at the next event you attend.

Phil Beames
Chair, NTC