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USMS Open Water Officials Guidelines

These guidelines define the tasks for the event referee, but can be useful for all officials. The open water referee is a position required by the USMS open water rules and is the official that is responsible for the good functioning and safety of the event. The referee needs to work in conjunction with the meet director to plan the event, conduct the event and wrap-up the competition.

Before the event:

- Meet director applies for an Open Water Sanction with the local LMSC 303.1
- Referee should work with the meet director and meet host to:
 - Course design
 - Stationary or running start
 - Finish location and marking
 - Number of waves per distance
 - Check in procedures
 - Marking swimmers
 - Waivers
 - Timing system
 - Kayaks, ski boats, motor boats and drivers
 - Life guards
 - EMTs location
 - Hospitality
 - Possible cancellation of event
- When the referee will arrive and where he/she will stay.
- Have a plat map of the proposed meet site and race course including the start and finish areas. May include intermediate buoys.
- Identify:
 - Meet director
 - Referee
 - Safety Coordinator
 - Scorer
 - Announcer
 - Clerk of Course
 - Starter
 - Sufficient number of judges, inspectors, timers and medical personnel to ensure a properly run open water event 303.7

Day of the event

- Referee supervises the set-up of the course (cable or other)
- Assign officials to their positions using a diagram of the course as well as:
 - Number of kayaks and location
 - Number of ski boats and location
 - Number of power boats and location
- Video the swimmers prior to the start in numerical order and write the list of swimmers.
- Swimmer check in
 - Waiver signed
 - Assigned number, wave and colored cap
 - Electronic timing band
 - Body and hat numbered
 - Card with swimmer number to be handed to clerk of course at entry into water
- General meeting of swimmers
 - Description of course
 - Starting procedures

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- Finish location
- Time between waves
- Medical station locations
- Possible cancellation of swim
- Water temperature and known hazards
- Tally of swimmers per wave
 - Line up in numerical order
 - Tally swimmer numbers
 - Note missing numbers in sequence
 - Video tape swimmers
- Start
 - Bull horn for referee to begin count down or use announcer
 - Air horn and flag for start
 - Starter location
- Official calls
 - Swimmer number
 - Infraction
 - Warning – yellow card
 - DQ - Red card – Remove from race by kayak or ski boat
- Finish
 - Near as possible to water
 - Officials in position- 2 sets of officials working together to identify finishing swimmers
 - Video camera functioning
 - Chip collection
 - Lost chips – note swimmer number
 - Dual confirmation between manual and electronic timing – use video as necessary
- Swimmer that did not finish
 - Swimmer picked up by motor boat
 - Swimmer crosses finish line before finishing entire course
 - Protests
 - Infractions in the water
 - Timing malfunction
 - Meet Results and Awards
 - Debriefing of officials
 - Calls made
 - Improvements for next year
 - Thank you

After the event

- Paper work completed by referee and meet director
- Letter of thank you – individual notes mailed or e-mailed letter to each official

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Appendix A—Event Officials Chart

Compiled by Jane Spinner, USA-Swimming

Position	Name	Radio?	Location	Races	Boat Driver
RACE OFFICIALS					
• Meet Director		Y	Beach	All	
• Safety Officer		Y	Beach	All	
• Meet Referee, Starter, #3 Turn Judge		Y	Point, Beach	All	
• Assistant Referee – between turn 3 and turn 1	Official	Y	Boat #1	1K, 2K, 3K	
• Turn Judge #1	Official	Y	Boat #2	All	
• Assistant Referee/Water Station – between turn 1 and turn 2	Official	Y	Water station boat #3	1K, 2K, 3K	
• Turn Judge #2	Official	Y	Boat #4	1K, 2K, 3K	
• Assistant Referee – between turn 2 and turn 3	Official	Y	Boat #5	1K, 2K, 3K	
• Safety/Back-up Boat		Y	Boat #6	All	
• Start Rope Line				All	
• Head Finish Judge		Y	Beach/Finish Line		
• Head Timer			Beach/Finish Line		
• Administrative Ref – check-in, results, scoring	Official	Y	Table		
• Race Secretary		Y	Table		

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• Clerk of Course			Table/Beach		
• Finish Judge #2			Beach/Finish Line		
• Timer #2			Beach/Finish Line		
• Chip retriever #1			Beach/Finish Line		
• Chip retriever #2			Beach/Finish Line		
• Video – Pre and Post Race	J		Beach	All	
ADMINISTRATIVE					
• USA Swimming Reg and fees			Table		
• Meet registration, fees and waivers			Table		
• Event entry check-in			Table	These folks could be used in a different position for the end of the race, such as finish judges, timers and chip retrievers	
• Chips #1			Table		
• Chips #2			Table		
• Chips #3			Table		
• Numbers/Nails #1			Table		
• Numbers/Nails #2			Table		
• Numbers/Nails #3			Table		
• Announcer		Y	Porch		
• Colorado Operator			Table		