



**U.S. MASTERS
SWIMMING**
OPEN WATER

Open Water Guide to Operations Major Changes for 2014

Sanction Guidelines

Updated [Sanction Guidelines](#) have been posted on the [USMS Guide to Operations](#). Please refer to the full document for complete guidelines, regulations and implementation requirements. Major changes for 2014 include:

- Safety Plans shall be uploaded during the sanction application process and must be approved by the Open Water Compliance Coordinator, OWCompliance@usms.org, prior to issuance of the sanction.
- Event staff must attend a mandatory pre-event meeting.
- Boat operators and swimmer monitors (see **swimmer monitor** below) must attend a mandatory pre-swim boat operator meeting.
- Swimmers must attend a mandatory pre-swim meeting.
- With the exception of boats owned and operated by or on behalf of Coast Guard, police, fire and rescue, or other government agencies, propeller driven boats must have a propeller guard **OR** a dedicated onboard **swimmer monitor** to assist the boat captain while navigating on the swim course. For these boats, swimmer monitors shall be assigned to each motorized watercraft without a propeller guard. The swimmer monitor shall ensure the boat steers clear of all swimmers while the motor is running. The swimmer monitor may not swim in the event. The swimmer monitor may not drive the boat; however they may perform other actions that do not detract from their primary role.
- Motorized watercraft operators working at the event shall provide proof of insurance. The Proof of Insurance shall be submitted to the Event Director prior to the event. This change rescinds the requirement to provide a certificate of insurance.
- The Event Director and LMSC are responsible for enforcement of guidelines and mandatory regulations.
- Event Directors must keep copies of proof of compliance (proof of insurance and checklists) for one year.

Safety Guidelines

Updated [Safety Guidelines](#) have been posted on the [USMS Guide to Operations](#). Please refer to the full document for complete guidelines, safety plan worksheet and check-lists. Major changes for 2014 include:

- Safety Guidelines have been edited into a shorter format. Addendums have been included to assist Event Directors and Safety Directors with safety planning. The Safety Guidelines represents USMS' expectations for performance at all USMS open water sanctioned events, open water training and open water clinics.
- Addendum A is the Open Water Safety Plan Worksheet. This document is designed to simplify the event safety plan. Event Directors and Safety Directors that may be hosting an open water event for the first time will find the worksheet a great tool to start putting their safety plan together.
- Addendum B is the Safety Director's Checklist. This document is recommended to assist the Safety Director the day of the event. The checklist represents all the safety details of the event that must be completed before the event is started. The check list should also be reviewed by the Event Director and Referee. If all items on the list has been completed, all three officials should sign the checklist with the Event Director keeping the signed document on file for one year.
- Addendum C is the Boat Operators Checklist. If an open water venue is using a motorized volunteer water craft as a part of their event, it is recommended the Boat Operator of the watercraft complete the safety checklist before the start of the event. The Boat Operators Checklist is a method of reminding the Boat Operator of the Safety Guidelines recommended to keep swimmers around their boat safe. This document should be verified and signed by the Event Director, the Safety Director and the Boat Operator. If all items on the list have been completed, the checklist should be kept on file for one year by the Event Director.
- Addendum D is the Coaches and Safety Directors Checklist for Open Water Training and Clinics. Even an open water practice or clinic should be safety conscious. Together, the open water coach/trainer and an appointed non-swimming safety director should review the safety checklist before the swimming begins. The checklist details important safety guidelines that will serve as a reminder to keep the swimmers in their care as safe as possible.