



Swimming South Africa Schools Aquatics Strategy Document

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is the **mission** of Swimming South Africa (SSA) to provide aquatic programs and services to the public and its members that will deliver medal winning performances and ensure every child swimmer. SSA will employ the following strategic objectives to achieve its vision and mission:

- Broadening the base of aquatics
- Achieving success in the international aquatics arena
- Raising the profile of aquatics
- Ensuring that SSA has effective support systems and adequate resources

2. CONTEXT

The need to develop a coherent strategy around schools aquatics was borne out of interactions with both the National Departments of Education (NDoE) and Sport & Recreation South Africa (SRSA).

A meeting was convened by SRSA and the NDoE at the Birchwood Conference Center in Boksburg on the 17th July 2010. Amongst those invited were representatives from Swimming South Africa, Athletics South Africa, School Sport – SRSA, Schools Aquatics and Schools Athletics.

The SRSA objectives for the meeting were as follows:

- Get an overview of the challenges faced by National Federations (NFs) and school codes in delivering and developing school sport
- Align School Codes and National Federation programmes
- Identify a development programme with agreed targets
- Agree on events
- Agree on age groups
- Agree on roles and responsibilities
- Agree on budgets
- Develop a programme for 2010/11 -2011/12

The following presentations and recommendations were made by the various stakeholders present at the meeting:



Schools Aquatics

It was evident that both Schools Aquatics and SSA had similar views on the role of schools sport which were closely aligned with the objectives of both SRSA and NDOE. The following issues were highlighted:

- The need of programmes to teach learners to swim, particularly from disadvantaged schools (township schools)
- The need for Intra and Inter Schools competitions for learners at local levels in particular the introduction of such activities for learners in township schools.
- The capacity building of Educators, in particular in township schools in the areas of Instructing Swimming, Technical Officiating, Coaching and Aquatics Specific Administration to support the introduction of local schools competitions
- The need to align National Competitions of Schools and National Age Group Competitions of the federation, as both competition streams target the same age group learners, and to maximize resource utilization
- There is a need to review the practice of charging athletes to participate in national and international school sport tournaments as it discriminates against those who cannot afford

Swimming South Africa

SSA proposed the following recommendations:

- That a proposed implementation plan be developed for SRSA for the 2010-2011 financial year for the national competitions and for Water Safety Education for school learners and an Aquatic Capacity Building Programme for Educators
- That the Water Safety Education and Educator Capacity Building programmes be aligned as close as possible to existing SSA projects and Club Development sites to maximize resource confluence and utilization
- The Swimming South Africa Transformation Strategy requires that a clear strategy and plan for Schools Aquatics as a crucial component thereof (the Transformation Strategy).

Sport & Recreation South Africa

SRSA summarised the meeting and provided the following directives:

- Federations are custodian of schools swimming
- Funds for the delivery of National Schools Championships will be transferred from SRSA to NFs, to facilitate the alignment of programmes and foster working relations between the School Code Structures and NFs
- SRSA will enter into Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with NFs to ensure that the funds for the delivery of the school sport are ring fenced
- Priority for government is for these funds to be spent with the objective of transformation and capacity building in that we need to get more previously disadvantaged swimmers to participate at these events, in particular those that cannot afford to do so.
- National competitions must be for athletes with potential, identified through ongoing league programmes throughout the country
- School Codes and NFs competition programmes must be aligned. An inclusive competition programme must be created where duplication does not occur
- For sport in schools to thrive, there must be a healthy working relationship between the school codes and NFs.
- Schools and federation were tasked to deliver a review to SRSA with a plan where this will be reviewed and dealt with including a budget

3. SCHOOLS AQUATICS STRATEGY

We are confident that the review process of Schools Aquatics within the general aquatics continuum will ensure that we are able to deliver on ensuring Every Child a Swimmer and streamline aquatic activities to develop talent as part of our Long Term Athlete Development plan.

SSA has identified the following objectives for schools aquatics:

- Alignment of School Aquatics Structures with SSA Structures
- Promote a mass participation program for aquatics in schools
- Integrate National Schools and SSA Age Group Competitions
- Build the capacity of educators

Note that the implementation of the strategy as outlined will be subject to the availability and receipt of funding from Sport and Recreation South Africa.

3.1 Schools aquatics Structures

Affiliates must ensure that the schools aquatics Structure are established in their areas of jurisdiction in accordance with SRSA requirements and in cooperation with their Provincial Department of Sport and Recreation. The established Schools Aquatics Structures must form an integral part of SSA Affiliate structures i.e. representation on discipline technical committees and provision in affiliate constitutions for an Affiliate Schools Committee.

3.2 Schools Mass Participation Program

The aim of the Schools Mass Participation program is to broaden the base of aquatics in South Africa. The purpose of the program is to ensure that we increase the number of registered participants in the sport; that we provide water-safety and aquatic awareness programs to the public and schools; and that we increase the number of black swimmers participating in our domestic competitions.

The program will focus on three areas i.e. Learn to Swim, Club Development and Participation of Schools in Aquatics. Key components of these focus areas are Capacity Building, Transformation & Development.



3.2.1 Learn-to-Swim

The aim of the Learn-to-Swim (LTS) program is to increase participation through awareness campaigns and activity programs in previously disadvantaged communities / townships, using local clubs or local municipal swimming pools as the hubs for swimming development.

The program focuses on introducing children to aquatics in a fun way through water based activities such as Rural Splash, Ocean Splash, Pool Splash, Polo Splash, Diving and Synchro Fun; as well raising awareness through water safety education presentations at schools which teaches children how to be water safe.

3.2.2 Club Development

The aim of the Club Development program is to ensure the sustainability of clubs based within and working from disadvantaged communities / townships and to establish new clubs at municipal pools in the aforementioned communities, where none exist. Identified clubs in disadvantaged / township areas will be supported and capacitated through SSA training and development programs. Each club should have a coach, two instructors, three officials, club chairman and secretary to operate effectively.

Clubs must assume responsibility for the schools within their areas. Clubs should focus on providing swimming lessons during the summer and water safety talks in the winter to schools in general and school children in particular. The schools under the guidance of the clubs must introduce inter-schools galas. This is aimed at uplifting school sport and reaching our goal: Every Child a Swimmer.

3.2.3 Participation

The primary focus at school should be that every learner should be water safe and only once this has been achieved the following programs can take place.

1) Swimming

- a) Inter-house swimming in schools to be encouraged and initiated, where absent.
- b) Leagues between neighbouring schools, centred around a communal pool to take place on a weekly basis. This will stimulate pride and a competitive spirit in the school.
- c) Talent identification should take place and swimmers with potential can be identified and directed into the club system, where more formal coaching and monitoring can take place.
- d) These weekly competitions would be rounded off with an end of season competition where the top school would be identified and rewarded.

2) Water Polo / Splash Polo

- a) Programs for all children at primary school, both male and female should be introduced; as an introductory form of Water Polo: Splash Polo at an early age.
- b) When these learners progress to high school, there should already be a good level of ball handling and playing skills.
- c) This will require specialized training and coaching and educators will need to be skilled.

3) Synchronized Swimming and Diving

- a) Children at primary schools should be exposed to both these disciplines at an early age to make them aware and stimulate their interest.
- b) As soon as these learners reach a stage where they can compete, these disciplines should be introduced to the weekly league competition.
- c) As with Water Polo, this will require specialized training and coaching and educators will need to be skilled.

3.3 Alignment of National Schools and SSA Age Group Competitions

The pressure experienced by younger swimmers to compete and perform at two major competitions in the same cycle at two major competitions namely SA Schools and the SSA Age Groups competitions is quite evident. In an attempt to address this, a new format has been introduced i.e. to merge the SA Schools competition and the various SSA Age Group Levels. Level 1 and Level 2 Age Group competitions are held on a Regional basis at three venues, Level 3 Age Group is a National Competition, held at one venue.

The aim of aligning SA Schools and SSA Age Group level competitions is to address the developmental objectives for transformation, talent identification and Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD).

3.3.1 Competition Alignment Outcomes

The following outcomes have been identified as crucial to the success of aligning both SA Schools and SSA Age Group level competitions:

- 1) The prestige of individual schools colours should not be a determinant on selection but rather on the competency and achievements, of learners. Schools should align

their colours policy based on a National standard thus achieving more uniformity throughout the country.

- 2) The selection of provincial school teams and representation should be reviewed in the context of SSA qualifying time standards for the appropriate level of participation of athletes, in line with the LTAD model.
- 3) The target for demographic representation for the schools teams should be a minimum of 50%

3.3.2 Competitions Format

We need to state at the outset that the intention of the revised competition format is to ensure that all eligible athletes are afforded the opportunity to participate at these events, in particular those athletes that are not in a financial position to afford participation.

- 1) Swimming South Africa Qualifying Times will determine at which level swimmers will participate (Competency based, which will result in athletes competing at the appropriate level for their performance ability)
- 2) This will ensure maximum participation as well as affording more swimmers the opportunity to qualify and be competitive at their level of competence. The competition will be scored to benefit the Provincial School Team as well as the club.
- 3) Each swimmer will score points for their club as well as their school province
- 4) The level at which the swimmers will participate will be determined at the closing date for Level 3. However if a swimmer qualifies for a higher level and wishes to participate at the higher level after the Level 3 closing date they may apply to SSA
- 5) School swimmers, must be selected to represent one of the 9 Political Provincial Provinces in which they reside.
- 6) This will be recognized as a Schools Team. Eg Regional Schools Team Level 1 Age Group, Regional Schools Team Level 2.
- 7) Since some of the "School Swimmers" will not have a time on the SSA Database to determine at what level they are competent to compete, a Trial event will need to take place only for swimmers not in a club.
- 8) These trial events can take place on an ongoing basis and these swimmers should be encouraged to participate in the Federation activities thus ensuring an opportunity to enhance their development and progress.

3.3.3 Schools Teams – Criteria for Selection

- 1) School Teams from the 9 Political Provinces must be selected for the Level 1 and 2 Regional Age Group Competitions.
 - a) The SSA Affiliates within the Political Provinces will be responsible to select the School Team.
 - b) The following considerations must be taken into account when selecting swimmers for the School Team / Squad.
 - i) School Swimmers who are not affiliated to a SSA Club receives first priority.
 - ii) Swimmers who, due to financial constraints, would not be able to participate.
 - iii) The team must be demographically balanced in line with the transformation policy.
 - iv) Swimmers selected for the "School Team" will receive a subsidy from SSA, via the relevant SSA Affiliate.
 - v) For affiliates to qualify for the subsidy, such affiliates must ensure that items 1), 2) and 3 as outlined above, have been complied with
 - c) Level 3 National Age Group Competition
 - i) There will be no specified school team/squad.

3.4 Capacity building of Educators

The aim of the Capacity Building program is to develop and increase the number of educators that are able to administer and conduct local programmes and competitions.

SSA will develop the capacity of educators by providing the following training courses:

- Learn To Swim Instructors,
- Level 1 Swim Coaches,
- Technical Officials, and
- Club Administrators.

The target audience for these courses is educators including Foundation Phase Educators, Senior / High school Educators and Sports leaders, coaches, physical educators.

Educators will need to participate in a swim competency program to assess their swimming capabilities. Qualified instructors in a group based activity programs will

facilitate these programs. During these sessions educators will receive water safety facilitation programs to conduct in classroom activities with their learners.

Further courses mentioned above will commence thereafter. Sequence of the training programs will be dependent upon available facilities and educator's schedules.

With each training program educator's skills will be assessed. Assessment that ensure outcomes are achieved and educators are capacitated to deliver aquatic programs in schools and communities.



ADDENDUM**Competitions Details 2010/2011 season****A) Level 1 – Regional Age Group Competitions**

SSA Affiliates	Schools Provinces
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Southern Region**East London, 1 – 3 April 2011****Hosted by Border Aquatics**

Western Province	Western Cape
South Western Districts	Western Cape
Eastern Province	Eastern Cape
Border	Eastern Cape

Central Region**Kimberley, 1 – 3 April 2011****Hosted by Northern Cape Swimming Association**

KwaZulu Natal	KwaZulu Natal
Northern KZN	KwaZulu Natal
Mpumalanga	Mpumalanga
Northern Cape	Northern Cape
FreeState	FreeState
Northern FreeState	FreeState

Northern Region**Geremiston, 1 – 3 April 2011****Hosted by Central Gauteng Aquatics**

Limpopo	Northern Province
North West	North West
Northern Tigers	Gauteng
Eastern Gauteng	Gauteng
Central Gauteng	Gauteng
Vaal Triangle	Gauteng

***This Level of competition makes provision for Swimming, Synchronised
Swimming and Diving***



B) Level 2 – Age Group Regional Competitions**SSA Affiliates****Schools Prov****Southern Region****Cape Town, 25 – 28 March 2011****Hosted by Western Province Aquatics**

Western Province	Western Cape
South Western Districts	Western Cape
Eastern Province	Eastern Cape
Border	Eastern Cape

Central Region**Bloemfontein, 25 – 28 March 2010****Hosted by Freestate Aquatics**

KwaZulu Natal	KwaZulu Natal
Northern KZN	KwaZulu Natal
Mpumalanga	Mpumalanga
Northern Cape	Northern Cape
Freestate	Freestate
Northern Freestate	Freestate

Northern Region**Pretoria, 25 – 28 March 2011****Hosted by Northern Tigers Aquatics**

Limpopo	Limpopo
North West	North West
Northern Tigers	Gauteng
Eastern Gauteng	Gauteng
Central Gauteng	Gauteng
Vaal Triangle	Gauteng

C) Level 3 – National Age Group Competition**SSA Affiliates****Schools Prov**

**Durban, 18 – 22 March 2011
Hosted by KwaZulu Natal Aquatics**

Western Province	Western Cape
South Western Districts	Western Cape
Eastern Province	Eastern Cape
Border	Eastern Cape
KwaZulu Natal	KwaZulu Natal
Northern KZN	KwaZulu Natal
Mpumalanga	Mpumalanga
Northern Cape	Northern Cape
FreeState	FreeState
Northern FreeState	FreeState
Limpopo	Limpopo
North West	North West
Northern Tigers	Gauteng
Eastern Gauteng	Gauteng
Central Gauteng	Gauteng
Vaal Triangle	Gauteng