SWIM IRELAND | An island of swimmers

# Swimming Officials Action Plan 2025-2029

Published: November 2025

# Introduction

Swim Ireland and the Regions are committed to providing quality competitions for clubs and swimmers in the region and at national level. An important part of competitions is the involvement of volunteers at every level.

Over the last number of years, we have seen a significant reduction in the number of qualified officials acting in roles at club, regional and national competitions. This in turn has had an impact on the quality of event for our swimmers, and has been highlighted by coaches, team managers and parents alike.

The following action plan will ensure each Region and Swim Ireland will have sufficient qualified officials for future competitions. It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure they meet the requirements set down by Swim Ireland.

It is our ambition that all officials will be qualified for the role they fill at regional and national competitions from 2029 onwards.

## Supported by

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# Swimming Officials Action Plan

To deliver on the Swimming Officials Action Plan we have identified four key areas of focus, under which key results will be delivered.

## Communication

## Workforce Development

## Clubs & Regions

## Organisational Excellence

# Communication

To strengthen engagement and support for our Officials community, we are implementing a series of initiatives designed to enhance communication, visibility, and development opportunities. These actions include:

Quarterly online forums for licensed officials, to encourage dialogue and share best practices.

Publishing an Officials Newsletter to keep everyone informed and connected.

Promoting competition dates for each season starting annually in September to ensure timely planning.

Highlighting Officiating as a volunteer role through targeted social media campaigns to attract new participants.

Facilitating post-competition debriefs with Officials following national competitions to gather feedback and improve future events.

Reviewing and updating the Officials availability template to improve visibility and accessibility for all stakeholders.

# Workforce Development

To advance the education and development of our Officials, we are committed to implementing a comprehensive strategy that supports growth, retention, and excellence across all levels. Key actions include:

Reviewing the education and development pathway for Officials, including delivery methods, to ensure relevance and accessibility.

Developing a Junior Officials programme aimed at retaining athletes within the sport and fostering future leaders.

Implementing mentoring and shadowing opportunities to build confidence and practical experience.

Delivering National Judge Courses in at least two regions annually to strengthen regional capacity.

Delivering disability awareness and inclusivity training to support participation of athletes with a disability in competitions.

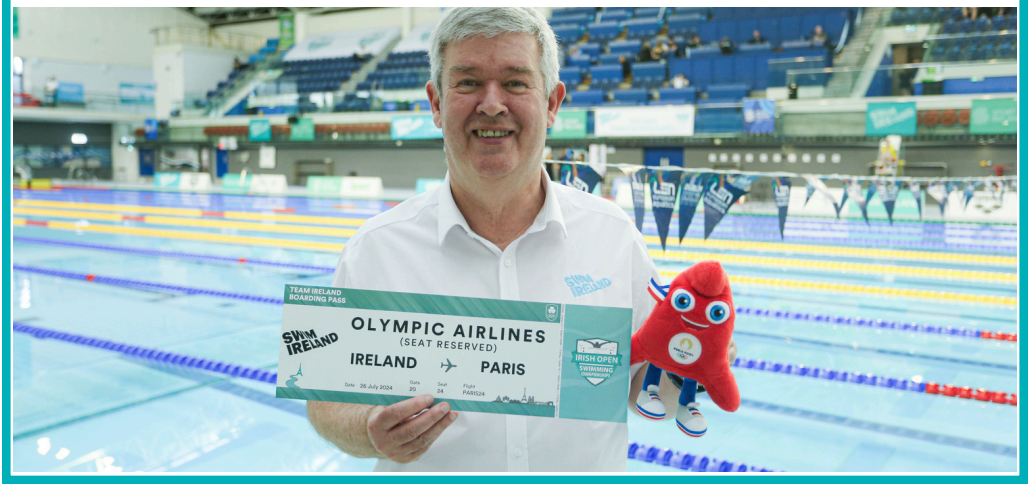
# Workforce Development

Supporting Senior Officials in gaining international experience to broaden expertise and representation.

Creating pathways for advanced roles, including Control Room Supervisor and Technical Delegate positions.

Increasing the number of Official Trainers by at least 10, ensuring a minimum of two active trainers in each region.

Expanding the pool of Official Assessors by at least 4, with at least one active assessor in every region.



# Clubs & Regions

To strengthen club engagement and ensure consistent standards across competitions, we are introducing a series of initiatives focused on support, transparency, and development. These actions include:

Delivering and facilitating club forums to assist new club members attending competitions.

Creating an Official availability template for regions to improve scheduling and visibility.

Providing guidance to clubs on rostering volunteers at National competitions for efficient resource allocation.

Offering clear guidance on Official's expenses to regions and clubs to ensure consistency and transparency.

Implementing and supporting Regional Official's working groups to foster collaboration and shared best practices.

# Clubs & Regions

Helping clubs increase the number of qualified officials through mandated quotas and in-house training opportunities.

Periodically reviewing and updating Meet Licensing criteria and processes to maintain high standards and compliance.

# Organisational Excellence

To enhance the structure, recognition, and overall experience for Officials, we are implementing a comprehensive plan focused on governance, guidance, and appreciation. Key actions include:

Establishing a National Officials Working Group to drive delivery of the Action Plan.

Maintaining representation of six Officials on the World Aquatics Officials list and re-introducing the Pre-World Aquatics Officials list to strengthen international presence.

Developing a guidance document on officiating opportunities to provide clarity and encourage participation.

Reviewing the Official's uniform, gathering feedback from current Officials, and ensuring uniform guidance is updated for consistency.

Improving the volunteer experience at all levels, including introducing a rewards or points system to recognise Officials who regularly contribute.

Updating key guidance documents, including; Assessment Process, Official's Licensing, and Official's Pathway.

# Delivering the Action Plan

We will deliver on these actions through a structured and collaborative process that prioritises engagement, transparency, and continuous improvement.

The National Officials Working Group will lead implementation, ensuring alignment with the Action Plan and providing regular progress updates.

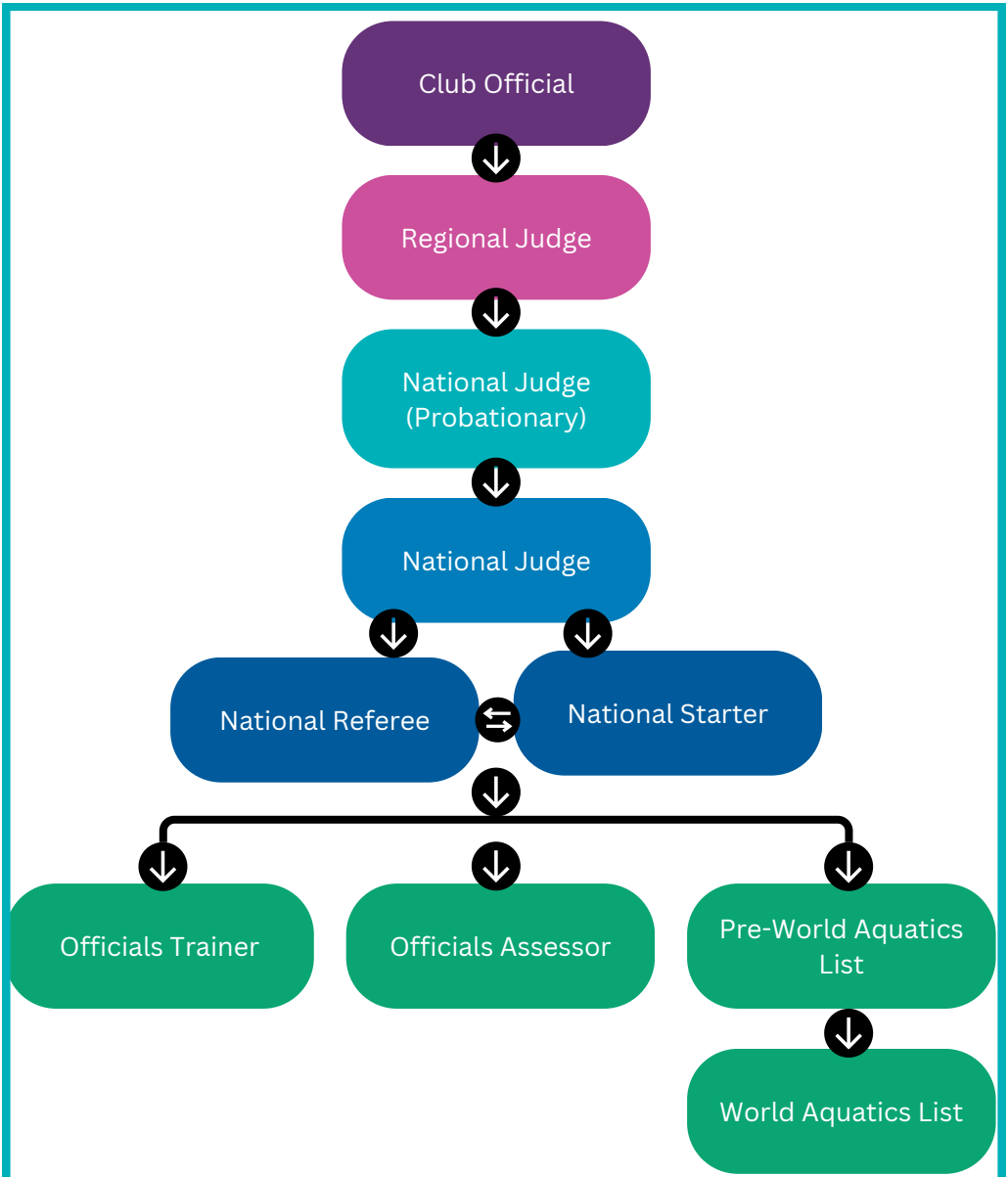
Consultation with Officials will be central to reviewing uniforms, guidance documents, and pathways, using surveys and feedback sessions to inform decisions.

International representation will be maintained through proactive nomination and support for Officials on World Aquatics lists, while opportunities to officiate will be clearly communicated via a dedicated guidance document and digital channels.

To enhance the volunteer experience, we will introduce recognition initiatives such as a rewards or points system and streamline processes for licensing, assessment, and progression.

All updates will be published in accessible formats, and regional engagement will be strengthened through forums and working groups to ensure consistent delivery nationwide.

# The Swimming Officials Pathway



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