

1. **TITLE:** **SAFE WATER ENTRY FOR COMPETITIONS - COMPETITIVE DIVE STARTS**
2. **DATE ISSUED:** 1 November 2002 **ISSUE:** 1
3. **PURPOSE:** To establish safety guidelines for safe water entry (Competitive Dive Starts) for competitors during competitions and training for competition.
4. **DEFINITION:**
 - 4.1 **Dive entry** is defined as entry into water where the upper body (the hands, arms and head followed by the torso and lower limbs) enters first during activities, which are conducted under aquatic programming such as: Swimming and related (triathlon, distance swimming) squad training and competition; Lifesaving classes.
 - 4.2 **Competitive dive start** is defined as entry into water from the side of the pool (flush or raised) or from a starting block for the purpose of starting a swimming based competition or training for a swimming based competition that may include the following: Swimming and related (triathlon, distance swimming) squad training; Swimming competition instruction; Swimming competitions/meets for swimming clubs, schools and other groups; Lifesaving classes.
 - 4.3 **Starting blocks (starting platforms)** are defined as raised platforms at the edge of a swimming pool, located in line with the mid point of each swimming lane, for the purpose of competitive swimming water entry and for housing the backstroke start handgrips.
5. **DESCRIPTION:**
 - 5.1 **Administration**
 - 5.1.1 All coaches and instructors or club officials should keep a record of competence of safe diving techniques, and competitive starts.
 - 5.1.2 Prior to participating in swimming events swimmers should be advised and warned of the water depth into which they may be required to enter during the course of any competition.
Note: Competition entry forms and promotional material should clearly advise competitors of the water depth in which competition(s) will be held.
 - 5.2 **Instruction in Safe Water Entry (see also Guideline PR 9 in Program section)**
 - 5.2.1 All persons who wish to participate in swimming or like (eg. Lifesaving) competitions should be instructed in the principles of safe water entry and diving techniques, and competitive dive starts in a progressive education program under the instruction of an appropriately qualified Coach or Instructor.
 - 5.2.2 All participants in swimming or like competition should receive appropriate instruction prior to participating in any swimming or like competitions.
 - 5.3 **Water Depths for Starts for Competition Swimming and Training (for trained competitors)**
 - 5.3.1 In water depth less than 900mm dive starts should not be permitted. All events should be commenced in the water.

- 5.3.2** (a) In water depths 900mm to 1000mm competitive dive starts may be permitted from concourse level to a maximum height above water of 200mm.
(b) If concourse height is greater than 200mm above the surface of the water, starts should be commenced from in the water.
- 5.3.3** (a) In water depths greater than 1000mm and less than 1200mm competitive dive starts may be permitted from a maximum height above water of 400mm.
(b) If concourse height is greater than 400mm starts should be commenced from in the water.
- 5.3.4** In water depths 1200mm or greater competitive dive starts may be permitted from a maximum height of 750mm.
- 5.3.5** (a) Starting blocks should only be available for use by those persons deemed as competent of executing a safe forward dive entry.
(b) Only qualified swim coach, lifesaving instructor (excepting beach life saving), and swim instructor (eg. AUSTSWIM) should assess competence.
- 5.3.6** In swimming pools where recreational and competition / training or learn to swim is being conducted side by side, a warning sign should be prominently displayed adjacent to those areas in which dive entries are being performed by trained (in safe dive entry) swimmers; which reads. Warning: Dive Entries Permitted by Trained Swimmers Under Coaches Supervision Only', or similar, *Note : A sign is not necessary where the pool is being used solely for competition swimming/training or learn to swim under supervision.*
- 5.4 Use of Starting Blocks (Refer also FD 6 Swimming Lane Design)**
Starting blocks should be inspected prior to each use to ensure they are correctly fitted, sturdy and free of any potential hazards
- 5.5 Isolation of starting platforms**
In pools where non-complementary activities are being conducted, starting blocks should be isolated from use when not used for competition or instruction.

6. REFERENCES:

1. Guideline PR 9 Teaching of Water Entry and Diving
2. Guideline FD 6 Swimming Lane Design
3. Guideline FD24 Design of Starting Blocks (Starting Platforms)
4. Guideline FD 3 Pool Depth Markings
5. Safe Diving Practices: Competitive Applications (Keith McElroy), Jenny Blitvich et al, 1999.
6. Dive depth and water depth in competitive swim starts, J Blitvich et al, 2000
7. FINA Handbook