

MEMORANDUM

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CORNEL MARCULESCU

TO: Swimwear Manufacturers
FROM: FINA Office – Lausanne
DATE: 20 August 2016
RE: SWIMWEAR FOR OPEN WATER SWIMMING EVENTS
October 1, 2016 - Submission date for the approval of wetsuits

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS ONE: 3

Dear Sirs,

Following the “Investigation Into Lower Water Temperatures For Open Water Swim Racing” done by the University of Portsmouth’s Extreme Environments Laboratory (EEL) and the decision of the FINA Bureau regarding the use of wetsuits at the FINA competitions, the following rules will apply for Open Water events starting from the 1st of January 2017:

- The lowest possible temperature of the water should remain at 16°C
- Between 16°C and 18°C, wetsuits + bathing cap are mandatory
- Between 18°C and 20°C, wetsuits are optional
- Over 20°C, wetsuits are not allowed.

According to the FINA rule GR 5.4

GR 5.4 Before any swimwear of new design, construction or material is used in competition, the manufacturer of such swimwear must submit the swimwear to FINA and obtain approval of FINA.

To comply with the FINA rule GR 5.4, FINA Bureau approved new clause to BL 8 to include regulations on wetsuits to be used at the FINA open water competitions. The new complete BL 8 rule is enclosed below.

BL 8 SWIMWEAR (By Laws, as approved by the FINA Bureau on August 5, 2016)

BL 8.1 All swimwear used at Olympic Games and FINA Events (pool and open water swimming competitions) shall be swimwear approved by FINA in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth in the FINA Requirements for Swimwear Approval (FRSA) issued by the FINA bureau and valid on the date of approval. Following an approval process conducted by the Swimwear Approval Commission, a list of approved swimwear is published by FINA (the Approved List) each year. The Approved List is published each year before December 31 and is valid starting from January 1 of the subsequent year.

BL 8.2 In pool and open water swimming competitions the competitor must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. No additional items, like arm bands or leg bands shall be regarded as parts of a swimsuit. All swimsuits (including wetsuits for open water

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competitions) shall comply with the requirements set forth in these By-Laws and the FRSA.

BL 8.3 For pool swimming competitions swimsuits for men shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee, and for women, shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor below the knee. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials.

BL 8.4 For open water swimming competitions, with water temperature from 20 C, swimsuits for both men and women shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the ankle. Subject to these specific shape specifications, swimsuits for open water swimming competitions shall further comply with all other requirements applicable to swimsuits for pool swimming competition.

BL 8.5 From the 1st of January 2017, for open water swimming competitions in water with temperature below 20 C, men and women may use either swimsuits (BL 8.4) or wetsuits. When the water temperature is below 18 C, the use of wetsuits is compulsory. For the purpose of these rules, wetsuits are swimsuits made of material providing thermal insulation. Wetsuits for both men and women shall completely cover torso, back, shoulders and knees. They shall not extend beyond the neck, wrists and ankles.

BL 8.6 BL 8.1 to BL 8.5 apply also for the Masters Open Water competitions.

[NOTE TO BL8.6: It is clarified that swimsuits, respectively wetsuits which fulfil the shape requirement set forth in BL 8.3, respectively BL 8.4 and 8.5 (for open water swimming competitions) can be accepted even if they do not bear a valid FINA approval label provided they effectively and evidently fulfil the material requirements set forth in the current FINA Requirements for Swimwear Approval. This is notably the case for swimsuits made of traditional permeable textile (i.e. open mesh material) material (such as cotton, Nylon, Lycra and the like) with no application of surface treatment closing the open mesh structure and wetsuits, which expressly fulfils the thickness requirement (for example wetsuit thickness provided by manufacturer). In case of doubt in this respect and when notably such doubt concerns a swimsuit or a wetsuit used at the occasion of a World record, an actual check of the swimsuit or wetsuit can be required from the competitor or Certifying Official and the swimsuit or wetsuit is to be forwarded to the FINA Office for submission to an actual control of all or parts of the requirements.]

BL 8.7 For team events in open water swimming, all swimmers from the same team must wear the same colour caps which shall also comply with the FINA rule BL 7.1.2.

Consequently and in line with the clause 3.2.4 of the “FINA Requirements for Swimwear approval” (FRSA) the Swimwear Approval Committee announce **October 1, 2016 as additional official submission date for the application of wetsuits.**

Submission of “wetsuits” for approval will be done according to the FRSA. Please note that the new clause 4.2 with criteria for the wetsuits has been created, and the latest edition of the FRSA, approved by the FINA Bureau on August 5, 2016, is available from the FINA website under the link below: <http://www.fina.org/sites/default/files/frsa.pdf>

All wetsuits approved during the submission October 1, 2016 will be included to the list of the FINA Approved Swimwear 2017.

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Please note that this additional submission is established for the wetsuits only and no applications for any other swimwear approval will be accepted. For this first submission of the wetsuits, the application will be accepted with no payment of contribution, on complimentary basis.

The official submission dates for approval of swimwear in 2017 will be announced in due time.

Sincerely yours,



Cornel Marculescu
FINA Executive Director