

MEMORANDUM

TO: All FINA Member Federations

FROM: FINA Office – Lausanne

DATE: 11th January 2017

RE: Wetsuits for Open Water Swimming
FINA BL 8.4 & BL 8.5

President
DR. JULIO MAGLIONE
Uruguay

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Kuwait

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China

AHMED AL FALASI
UAE

Honorary President
MUSTAPHA LARFAOUI
Algeria

Executive Director
CORNEL MARCULESCU

Dear Sirs,

Reference is made to the latest edition of the FINA rule BL 8, in particular the rules applicable to the use of wetsuits at FINA Open Water Swimming Competitions. Please find below the text of related clauses BL 8.4 and BL 8.5 as approved by the FINA Bureau on August 5th, 2016:

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.

To comply with the FINA rule GR 5.4, at the end of 2016 the Swimwear Approval Committee (SAC) had an additional submission for swimwear approval, organised specially for the homologation of wetsuits to be included in the FINA list of Approved swimwear 2017. During the submission, only a few models of wetsuits were duly approved, and

unfortunately, this number does not provide adequate opportunity of choice for the athletes and teams.

According to our observations, the market of wetsuits exists and there are quite many variations of wetsuits produced and commercially released worldwide. However in order to have a sufficient list of duly approved products additional time is required.

Therefore during 2017, control of wetsuits at the Open Water Swimming competition will be done directly by the Technical Officials prior to the competition.

The wetsuits should meet minimum requirements for coverage - wetsuit must completely cover torso, back, shoulders and knees, and shall not extend beyond the neck, wrists and ankles. In addition, the outer surface of the used wetsuits shall not include outstanding shapes, such as ridges, fins etc.

Details on exact procedure for control and confirmation of wetsuits at the FINA competition will be available from the official FINA Technical Delegate prior to the competition.

During the year, the SAC will carry out several official submissions, and consider that by the end of 2017 there will be a list of duly approved wetsuits with sufficient number of garments produced by a good variety of swimwear manufacturers.

From the 1st of January 2018, control of the wetsuits at the Open Water swimming competitions will be done by verification of respective "FINA Approved logo" to be printed on a garment as confirmation of approval.

We remain at your disposal should you have any questions on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Cornel Marculescu
Executive Director

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